Wisdom is the Principal Thing For Your Ministry

Dag Heward-Mills

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Wisdom Is The Principal Thing For Your Ministry
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CHAPTER 1

Wisdom is the Principal Thing for Your Ministry

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Proverbs 4:7

It is important that you believe that wisdom is the principal thing for your ministry.

Wisdom is the principal thing for every minister! Indeed, it is true that wisdom is the most fundamental thing you will need for your ministry. Wisdom is the greatest asset for your ministry. It is the primary gift of God for your ministry. Through wisdom, you will receive all the other things that are necessary for ministry. Most of the failure we experience in ministry is because of a lack of God's wisdom.

Wisdom is the principal thing because the word of God is the principal thing. In the beginning was the Word! The Word was with God! The Word was God! God and His Word are always at the centre and the beginning of anything worthwhile. If your life is to amount to anything, God and His Word must be the principal thing. God is His Word and the Word is God! All the things that you can desire can never compare with the value of having God and His word in your life.

Is it true that power is not the principal thing for ministry?

Is it true that miracles are not the principal thing for ministry?

Is it true that prayer is not the principal thing for ministry?

Is it true that fasting is not the principal thing for ministry?

Is it true that waiting on God is not the principal thing for ministry? Wow!

That is amazing! Wisdom is the principal thing I need for ministry!

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Proverbs 8:10-11

Before we go any deeper, it is important that you understand that the wisdom we are speaking about comes from the Word of God. Through Thy commandments Thou has made me wiser than my enemies. Wisdom comes to you through the Word of God. Through the commandments of God your life changes. You are filled with wisdom when you meditate on the commands of God.

THOU THROUGH THY COMMANDMENTS HAST MADE ME WISER than mine

enemies: for they *are* ever with me.

Psalm 119:98

All the wisdom we are speaking of in this book has its source in the word of God. There are different kinds of wisdom. I am not talking about human cleverness or deceptive speeches. I am not talking of high-sounding words. I am not talking about declaring that you are a millionaire when you actually owe a trillion.

What is the point in using big words to confuse people?

What is the use of over complicating simple subjects until no one understands what you are saying?

What is the use of giving a speech on the budget after which no one remembers or understands what you said?

These cleverly presented impressions are not the wisdom of God I am sharing about. You will become far wiser than your enemies who seek to destroy you. This wisdom will come to you through the Word of God.

It is time to make wisdom the principal thing in your life! Exalt God's wisdom in your life and ministry. Believe in the Word!

Believe that the Word is the main thing!

Believe that the wisdom of God is the principal thing.

Exalt wisdom and it will promote you!

Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

Proverbs 4:8

Become a wise man by believing that wisdom is more important than money. Take your mind off the importance of money, gold and silver; till you believe more in the importance of wisdom than in the importance of money.

CHAPTER 2

Wisdom is the Principal Thing because the Word of God is the Principal Thing

THE WISE MEN ARE ASHAMED, THEY ARE DISMAYED AND TAKEN: LO, THEY HAVE REJECTED THE WORD OF THE LORD; AND WHAT WISDOM IS IN THEM? Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace.

Jeremiah 8:9-11

If you reject the word of God, what wisdom can you claim to have? You have no wisdom, once you do not have the word of God.

Wisdom is the principal thing because the word of God is the principal thing for us servants of God. You can never claim to have wisdom outside the word of God. The word of God is the wisdom of God for our lives. The word of God is the principal thing that is needed for your ministry.

Indeed, the word of God in your life is more important than prayer.

The word of God is more important than power.

The word of God is more important than miracles.

It is through the word of God that you will know how much you have to pray.

It is through the word of God that you will know how much you have to fast.

It is through the word of God that you will know and understand the role of miracles, power and healing in your ministry.

The word of God is definitely more important than anything else.

If I had to choose between praying and the word of God, I would choose the word of God.

Through the word of God, I will know exactly what to do next.

I will be corrected, directed, instructed, rebuked and guided through the word of God. Indeed, I will become very prayerful and full of fasting through my understanding of the word of God.

CHAPTER 3

Wisdom is the Secret to Mighty Works in Ministry

And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? And WHAT WISDOM IS THIS WHICH IS GIVEN UNTO HIM, THAT EVEN SUCH MIGHTY WORKS ARE WROUGHT BY HIS HANDS?

Mark 6:1-2

Wisdom is the principal thing! Wisdom is the reason for mighty works, great works and great achievements in ministry. When Jesus walked the earth, He did great things. He accomplished great things.

People followed Jesus and were greatly impressed with the mighty accomplishments of His ministry. His ministry is effective up till today. Notice how the people attributed Jesus' great success in ministry to His wisdom. They said, "What wisdom is this that such mighty works are done?"

They did not say, "What prayer is this?"

They did not ask, "What power is this?"

They did not say, "What fasting has been done!"

They just exclaimed, "What wisdom is this that such mighty works are accomplished through Him!"

Indeed, it takes great wisdom to accomplish mighty works. Let that settle in your mind for all time.

Those who accomplish great things for God know something you don't know.

They have some wisdom you do not have.

If you knew what they knew, if you had the understanding that they had, you would have the wisdom to accomplish great things as well.

Why have you not accomplished certain great things in life and in ministry?

Why have you not achieved certain great and mighty works?

It is because there is some wisdom you do not have! Wisdom is the principal thing! Wisdom is the reason for mighty works, great works and great achievements in ministry.

You may look up to some of the great people in ministry. You may see people doing great works for the Lord.

Always remember that they must know something you do not know.

Great accomplishers have some wisdom, some understanding, some knowledge and some counsel that you do not have. Read it for yourself:

And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, AND SAID, WHENCE HATH THIS MAN THIS WISDOM, AND THESE MIGHTY WORKS?

Matthew 13:54

CHAPTER 4

Wisdom Will Make You a Great Leader

By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

Proverbs 8:15-16

I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

Proverbs 8:20

By wisdom, kings reign! This means that by wisdom kings lead their subjects forward into prosperity. In other words, wisdom is the principal thing used by kings to lead and rule their subjects.

One of the greatest challenges of ministry is leading people. Human beings are difficult to lead and to control. The more democratic people become, the more they behave like spoilt children.

Proud, democratic and opinionated groups are virtually ungovernable and unleadable. That is why anointed and spiritual churches are not led by democratic systems.

Wisdom is the master key to the leadership skills you need for ministry. Wisdom is the key to dealing with the challenges of leadership. Wisdom is the key you need to control human behaviour.

The most evil group of beings on the earth are devils and demons. The next most evil group are human beings. It is no small task to lead a group of human beings anywhere. Human beings are deceptive. Human beings are treacherous. Human beings are ungrateful. Human beings are envious. Every modern movie depicts the evil, the immorality, the treachery and the wickedness of mankind today.

Jesus said, “Beware of men” (Matthew 10:17).

Jesus never said, “Beware of devils” but He did warn us to beware of men.

Being a leader is like managing a zoo. Every animal member of the zoo wants to be free. Every animal will attack you if it gets the chance.

Every animal will eat you for lunch, if it can.

Even though it is better for the animals to be safely in the zoo, they all resent their captivity. Most animals will actually live longer in a zoo than in the wild. Yet all the animals hate you and would bite off your arms, crush your skull and eat up your intestines if they got the chance.

Lions live to be about twenty years old when they are kept in a zoo. Lions that live in the wild live only up to about eight years. Indeed, it is better for a lion to have food brought to it every day. Yet, this same lion would kill you without blinking an eye.

To lead people is like managing this zoo. The animals will eat up each other if they get the chance. Some of the animals are quiet-looking but still cannot be trusted.

The crocodile, for instance, lies very still without uttering a sound. But you cannot trust them at all. The snakes sleep all day but you cannot trust them either. Some of the animals ignore you when you pass by, but they are still very dangerous and deadly. This is how human beings are.

It is as though the animals are ungrateful, unreasonable and hateful. That is exactly how human beings are. You need great skill to live amongst them and even more to lead them to become a united community dwelling together in peace and harmony. The last time I walked through a zoo, I realised how much thought had gone into keeping all these animals together in one place. Great wisdom had been used to protect the animals from each other. Great wisdom had been used to protect the animals from those of us who would come to see them and vice versa.

By wisdom kings reign! By wisdom kings decree justice! Without wisdom you cannot reign, you cannot rule, you cannot govern! Leadership is the art of reigning over people who hate you, who lie about you, who are always trying to cheat and deceive you. If you think this is a simple job then you do not understand what it means to be a leader.

Moses learned first-hand how evil human beings were. Moses struggled with the ungrateful Israelites for years until God Himself rejected them. Moses needed all the wisdom that he could gather to lead these people out of Egypt and into Israel. You would have thought that because Moses was delivering the people from captivity, he would be hailed and honoured; but not so!

He was insulted, criticized and accused deeply throughout the years he led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land.

Desire wisdom so that you can become a great leader! Desire the wisdom of leadership. Read all you can about leadership and implement the great wisdom of leadership.

CHAPTER 5

Wisdom Will Guarantee You Victory in Every Battle

A WISE MAN IS STRONG; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.

Proverbs 24:5

WISDOM STRENGTHENETH THE WISE more than ten mighty men which are in the city.

Ecclesiastes 7:19

Wisdom makes you strong! Wisdom strengthens you! Strength to obey God is found through wisdom. Remember that your wisdom is in the word of God.

Wisdom is the carrier of the divine strength that you need for your ministry. Strength of character is found through wisdom.

Strength of leadership is found through wisdom. Your strength will not diminish until your ministry is done. The wiser you are, the stronger you are!

If you are not strong, you cannot lead people, you cannot govern people, you cannot take the decisions that you need to take. Democracy weakens leaders and they are unable to guide and lead the way they want to. Many people in positions of authority are not strong enough. They do not have the strength to lead and guide people.

Most people are resistant to change. Even those who know that change is good are resistant to important changes. If your ministry does not have a major change every few months, you are probably stagnating.

I notice there are major changes that take place in my ministry every one to two years. You need strength to implement changes for people who are resistant to change and improvement.

CHAPTER 6

Wisdom Will Give You A Stable Worldwide Ministry

In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. …Behold, I have done according to thy words: LO, I HAVE GIVEN THEE A WISE AND AN UNDERSTANDING HEART; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

1 Kings 3:5, 12

AND SOLOMON REIGNED OVER ALL KINGDOMS FROM THE RIVER UNTO THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES, AND UNTO THE BORDER OF EGYPT: THEY BROUGHT PRESENTS, AND SERVED SOLOMON ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE. And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl. For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: AND HE HAD PEACE ON ALL SIDES ROUND ABOUT HIM. AND JUDAH AND ISRAEL DWELT SAFELY, EVERY MAN UNDER HIS VINE AND UNDER HIS FIG TREE, FROM DAN EVEN TO BEER-SHEBA, ALL THE DAYS OF SOLOMON.

1 Kings 4:21-25

Solomon asked for wisdom from God, and God gave him a wise and understanding heart. The result of this wise and understanding heart is seen in the fourth chapter of the first book of Kings. Solomon reigned peacefully over a vast and expansive region. All the people under his leadership were loyal to him. Everyone dwelt safely and there were no dangers of breakaway kingdoms. There were no dangers of rebellion.

Wisdom is the secret of having a worldwide ministry of loyal, loving and faithful servants. God wants to give you faithful disciples who humbly and faithfully follow your leadership.

Most pastors cannot expand beyond one local church. They cannot imagine nor understand how you can lead people who are not with you in the same location. Such things are accomplished by wisdom. That is the kind of thing that happened under Solomon's reign.

God wants to give you great wisdom for your ministry. I do believe that prayer is important. I can pray for many hours at a time. I believe in praying and fasting and waiting on God.

However, the key to a loyal, worldwide ministry is the wisdom of God! People who accomplish great things know something that you do not know. Solomon attained stability and calm over an extensive region. All the people who were out of his sight were loyal to him. You will experience the same kind of extensive and expansive leadership over churches, regions and

nations when you receive that wisdom from God.

CHAPTER 7

Wisdom Turns You Into a Builder

THEREFORE WHOSOEVER HEARETH THESE SAYINGS OF MINE, AND DOETH THEM, I WILL LIKEN HIM UNTO A WISE MAN, WHICH BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON A ROCK: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Matthew 7:24-27

A wise man builds something. What you have built reveals your wisdom. A lack of buildings, houses, structures and development reveals a lack of wisdom. A lack of roads, streets, paved lanes, highways, motorways, tunnels and bridges reveals a lack of wisdom.

Ignorant people believe that a lack of buildings reveals a lack of money. Actually, that is not the case! Wisdom is what enables you to build. The bible is very clear about this fact.

THROUGH WISDOM IS AN HOUSE BUILDED; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

Proverbs 24:3-4

Wisdom is the way you think. The way you think makes you build something or not. When I was a student, I could have built a house. I could have bought some land and I could have built a house because my father gave me enough money for that.

Unfortunately, I did not have the wisdom of a builder so I did not build anything. Many people have more than enough money but do not build anything.

Many nations have enough money and resources to build roads, highways, streets, bridges, intersections, fly-overs, tunnels, underpasses and overpasses. They simply do not do it because they lack the wisdom to do it.

Wisdom makes you a practical person. Many leaders have lofty ideas but are not hands-on practical people. They sit in their armchairs and receive invoices, bills and outrageous estimates for projects.

Most of these projects never get started or completed because there is an impractical and aloof personality in charge of things. The wisdom for practical things is what many people lack.

When I started building my house, I found out that the cost of building materials was much lower when you went to buy them yourself. I found out that the cost of everything would jump sky

high when I sent certain people to do the purchasing.

Some people's wisdom is to acquire loans. They believe that the only way to build something is to get a loan to build it. However, many great developments were not built with loans. Many people rolled up their sleeves and built their roads, canals, railways and cities with hard practical labour. The easiest thing to do is to get a loan and sign off a huge contract. Unfortunately, these huge loans are not so readily available today. That is why poor countries remain poor. Poor countries often have bad leaders who lack the practical wisdom of building the hard way.

When you receive the wisdom of God, you are able to do what is right. The right thing to do is to build a house on a rock.

Wisdom is the application of God's word for you to become a doer of hard and difficult things.

Wisdom is the application of God's word for you to become a builder. Wisdom does not make you a beggar.

Wisdom makes you prosper!

Wisdom makes you a builder!

Wisdom makes you a developer!

Wisdom will cause you to build a house on a rock. It is much easier to build on the sand. It will take much longer to build on a rock.

It is time to roll up your sleeves and become a builder.

I did not say it is time to roll up your sleeves and get a loan.

Become a builder of great things.

A wise man builds!

A wise man builds on a rock!

When you build through loans, the waters and floods can wash away your achievements.

There will definitely be financial upheavals and economic changes that will threaten all that you have accomplished through loans and debts.

You will be filled with joy as you receive the wisdom of God and practically build many things in your lifetime.

Do not follow theoreticians who talk a lot but have not achieved anything.

Do not follow people who call themselves millionaires but actually ***owe*** a trillion.

What is the point in being a millionaire when you owe a trillion? Receive the wisdom of God and become a builder of real things!

Go to the great cities of this world that have been ruled with a certain kind of wisdom and see how built up they are. See the roads, tunnels, bridges, intersections, streets, lanes, railroads and skyscrapers. Go to the poverty-stricken undeveloped cities of this world. See for yourself the lack

of roads, tunnels, bridges, streets and lanes. See for yourself the sandy paths and flooded lanes. See for yourself the huge traffic build-up at every junction. See the lack of car parks, bus stations, trains and every basic infrastructure. These places have been ruled with a certain way of thinking. Your wisdom is the way you think. There is a kind of wisdom that creates poverty and lack in every department.

> **For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also *he that is born* in his kingdom becometh poor.**
>
> **Ecclesiastes 4:14**

CHAPTER 8

Wisdom Is the Secret To Surviving Crises

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: AND THE RAIN DESCENDED, AND THE FLOODS CAME, AND THE WINDS BLEW, AND BEAT UPON THAT HOUSE; AND IT FELL NOT: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Matthew 7:24-27

A storm represents a crisis. A storm represents a difficult season. A wise man is able to pass through a difficult season and come out shining. Wisdom is the application of God's word to make you survive every crisis.

Wisdom will help you to survive every disaster.

Wisdom is the application of God's word for you to become someone who survives and prevails through the changing scenes of life. It is the master key to being an evergreen tree.

The wise man builds his house on a rock. The wise man's house, which was built on a rock, survived the storm beautifully. God wants you to survive every crisis. If you think that you are going to float through this life on flowery beds of ease, then you do not know what is in this life.

There are going to be lots of storms, trials, difficulties and problems. Every man who comes into this world experiences many evil days. Look at how Jacob described his life: he said his life had been made up of a few evil days.

And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: FEW AND EVIL HAVE THE DAYS OF THE YEARS OF MY LIFE BEEN, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

Genesis 47:9

Whenever you get into a crisis, you will need to find a solution that takes you out safely. It is important to believe in the wisdom of God. Do what the wisdom of God tells you to do and you will come out shining.

There is nothing like a crisis-free life!

There will always be emergencies, disasters, catastrophes, crises and calamities.

How to come out using the wisdom of God is what you need to learn. Always remember that the word of God contains the wisdom of God for your crisis.

How to Survive a Crisis Using the Wisdom of God

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

Always remember this verse when you fall into a crisis situation and you will come out shining. Use this scripture to guide every decision in the time of crisis and trouble. This verse will give you the wisdom to know how to navigate out of the troubles that seek to drown you.

The wisdom of God is very well described in this scripture. The wisdom of God is characterized by purity, peacefulness, gentleness, malleability, mercy, good fruits, fairness and the absence of pretence. Every decision taken should be characterized by these eight traits.

What is the wise thing to do? What is the right thing to do? Use this scripture to help you take proper decisions that will eject you from the crisis. Do not use our own mind! Use the wisdom of God! Stop using little quips and sayings as your guidepost.

People say things like, "What goes around comes around."

They say, "If you do good, you do it for yourself."

They say, "Every little crocodile becomes a big crocodile."

These apparently wise sayings are nice and wise-sounding but Christians have the word of God as our great source of wisdom.

You have the word of God and you know what the wisdom of God is. Use the wisdom of God as your guidepost. Let the scripture tell you what the best thing to do is.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

1. **Do what is pure, chaste, uncorrupted and unpolluted and you will come out of your crisis by the wisdom of God.** Doing something impure and corrupted will only take you deeper into trouble.

2. **Do what is peaceful, non-aggressive, calm, non-violent and you will come out on top of your crisis.** Being aggressive and violent will only take you deeper into crisis.

3. **Be gentle, mild, kind, tender and moderate and you will come out of your crisis and calamity unscathed.** Rushing into things without duly thinking about the implications will get you into more crises.

4. **Be easy to be entreated, easy to plead with, easy to beg and easy to implore, easy to change your mind and you will be doing the right thing that will take you out of**

your crisis. Being stubborn, difficult to reason with, having long meetings is a sign of a lack of wisdom.

5. Be merciful, forgiving, gracious, lenient and generous and you will escape from the crisis without being harmed.

6. Take a decision to bear much fruit, produce a good harvest, have great results and you will come out of your crisis.

7. Be fair, impartial, unbiased, objective, open-minded, reasonable and you will overcome every crisis you find yourself in.

8. Be without hypocrisy and you will overcome every crisis you find yourself in.

CHAPTER 9

Wisdom Guarantees Victory in Impossible Situations

There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.

Ecclesiastes 9:14-16

There are many impossible situations that you will face in your life and ministry. An impossible situation is one in which you cannot see any way

out. In the story above, we see a city being besieged by a great king. The city had a few men in it and faced an impossible situation. Everyone in the city was doomed to die. How do you come out of such a situation?

Wisdom is the application of God's word to impossible situations.

Wisdom gives you the grace to overcome where others would have drowned.

Daniel experienced many impossible situations and came out of each one through the wisdom of God.

Daniel was an eunuch and a slave with no future but through the wisdom of God, he overcame the impossible situation.

God sent His anointing to Daniel and gave him His wisdom.

Daniel overcame the fact that he was an eunuch and became an outstanding personality in the king's palace.

Daniel and Impossible Situations

1. Daniel used the wisdom of God to overcome the impossible situation of being a helpless eunuch.

Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs.

And the prince of the eunuchs said unto Daniel, I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your meat and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse liking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king.

Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us

pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.

So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat. Thus Melzar took away the portion of their meat, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse.

As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar.

And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

Daniel 1:9-20

2. Daniel used the wisdom of God to overcome the impossible situation of being asked to interpret a dream when the king himself could not remember his own dream. Daniel and all the wise men were sentenced to die if they could not tell the king the dream that he had had plus the interpretation of the dream.

And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar NEBUCHADNEZZAR DREAMED DREAMS, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.

Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, THE THING IS GONE FROM ME: IF YE WILL NOT MAKE KNOWN UNTO ME THE DREAM, WITH THE INTERPRETATION THEREOF, YE SHALL BE CUT IN PIECES, AND YOUR HOUSES SHALL BE MADE A DUNGHILL. But if ye shew the dream, and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honour: therefore shew me the dream, and the interpretation thereof.

Daniel 2:1-6

Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: HE GIVETH WISDOM UNTO THE WISE, AND KNOWLEDGE TO THEM THAT KNOW UNDERSTANDING: HE REVEALETH THE DEEP AND SECRET THINGS: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. I THANK THEE, AND PRAISE THEE, O THOU GOD OF MY FATHERS, WHO HAST

GIVEN ME WISDOM AND MIGHT, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter.

Daniel 2:17-23

The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; But THERE IS A GOD IN HEAVEN THAT REVEALETH SECRETS, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. BUT AS FOR ME, THIS SECRET IS NOT REVEALED TO ME FOR ANY WISDOM THAT I HAVE more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

Daniel 2:26-30

3. Daniel used the wisdom of God to overcome the impossible situation of interpreting the handwriting on the wall that no one understood. Every one knew that there was some kind of wisdom, light, understanding and knowledge that Daniel possessed, and that would help them overcome this impossible situation. It was Daniel's wisdom that helped him to overcome.

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonied.

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: THERE IS A MAN IN THY KINGDOM, IN WHOM IS THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLY GODS; AND IN THE DAYS OF THY FATHER LIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM, LIKE THE WISDOM OF THE GODS, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made

master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

Daniel 5:1-12

CHAPTER 10

Wisdom is the Secret to Promotion in Ministry

Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

Proverbs 4:8-9

Your wisdom is the way you think. The way you think makes you act in a certain way. Your wisdom makes you think in a certain way. It is the wisdom that God gives you that causes you to be promoted over and over again. You will be promoted in the ministry through wisdom! Pray every day for the Spirit of revelation and wisdom! Through the Spirit of wisdom, you will be highly promoted in the ministry. Instead of being a nobody, you will become a "somebody". Instead of being rejected, your ministry will be accepted and received by many people. Promotion will come to you from the Lord when you walk in this wisdom!

> NOW THEREFORE LET PHARAOH LOOK OUT A MAN DISCREET AND WISE, AND SET HIM OVER THE LAND OF EGYPT. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine. And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? AND PHARAOH SAID UNTO JOSEPH, FORASMUCH AS GOD HATH SHEWED THEE ALL THIS, THERE IS NONE SO DISCREET AND WISE AS THOU ART: THOU SHALT BE OVER MY HOUSE, AND ACCORDING UNTO THY WORD SHALL ALL MY PEOPLE BE RULED: ONLY IN THE THRONE WILL I BE GREATER THAN THOU.
>
> And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.
>
> Genesis 41:33-44

Wisdom is the primary gift given by God to make you a highly promoted ministry.

Let the scripture tell you what the best thing to do is. Do what this scripture teaches and you will be promoted. Believe in the wisdom of God! Do not trust your own ideas! Do not believe in devilish wisdom! Do not believe in old wives' fables! Do not live by traditional proverbs and wise

sayings. Follow what the Word says is "wisdom".

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

1. Do what is pure, chaste, uncorrupted and unpolluted and you will be highly promoted.

Doing something impure and corrupted will only take you deeper into trouble.

2. Do what is peaceful, non-aggressive, calm, non-violent and you will be highly promoted.

Being aggressive and violent will only take you deeper into crisis.

3. Be gentle, mild, kind, tender and moderate and you will be highly promoted.

Rushing into things without duly thinking about the implications will get you into more crises.

4. Be easy to be entreated, easy to plead with, easy to beg and easy to implore, easy to change your mind and you will be highly promoted.

Being stubborn will make your crises worse. So will having long meetings to explain simple things because you are difficult to reason with.

5. Be merciful, forgiving, gracious, lenient and generous and you will be highly promoted.

6. Take a decision to bear much fruit, produce a good harvest, have great results and you will be highly promoted.

When you bear much fruit, you end up being promoted. Planting many churches, winning many souls, writing many books, following up many converts and counselling many people, are ways to bear much fruit. Being filled with good fruits is wisdom and it will always cause you to be promoted. Instead of conniving and scheming to be known and favoured by the boss, you must fight to bear much fruit. Bearing fruit will always lead to your promotion.

7. Be fair, impartial, unbiased, objective, open-minded, reasonable and you will be highly promoted.

Being fair and impartial will cause many people to appreciate your leadership. They will respect your judgment and will acknowledge that you are just and true. People resent being treated unfairly. Many people will desert you because you do not treat them objectively and reasonably.

Your promotion will not come on because you have not been fair and unbiased. People who are tribalistic, race-conscious and colour-conscious do not get promoted. They end up being leaders of little groups that have no connection with the larger community. Pastors of churches of one ethnic group or one colour are usually pastors of small churches. They never dominate cities or nations. Learn to be fair and impartial in your dealings with people.

8. Be without hypocrisy and you will be highly promoted.

Be without pretence!

Be without insincerity and two-facedness!

Two-faced people are discovered after a while.

Two-faced people are hated for their deception. They are hated for their pretence.

A hypocrite is a traitor! A hypocrite can become a Judas! Traitors are not loved! Traitors are eventually rejected by both sides. Get out of pretence, deception and hypocrisy! It is not a wise state to be in. Through your openness and sincerity, you will be liked by many people and it will lead to your promotion.

Open rebuke is better than secret love.

Proverbs 27:5

Open rebuke is better than secret love. An open rebuke demonstrates more love to a friend than a secret love which withholds rebuke when it should be given.

CHAPTER 11

Wisdom Will Turn You into a National Ministry

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that *was* upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

And DAVID WENT OUT WHITHERSOEVER SAUL SENT HIM, AND BEHAVED HIMSELF WISELY: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants. And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick.

And the women answered *one another* as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *but* thousands: and *what* can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and *there was* a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall *with it*. And David avoided out of his presence twice. And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

AND DAVID BEHAVED HIMSELF WISELY IN ALL HIS WAYS; AND THE LORD *WAS* WITH HIM. WHEREFORE WHEN SAUL SAW THAT HE BEHAVED HIMSELF VERY WISELY, HE WAS AFRAID OF HIM. BUT ALL ISRAEL AND JUDAH LOVED DAVID, BECAUSE HE WENT OUT AND CAME IN BEFORE THEM.

1 Samuel 18:1-16

It is time to learn from King David.

God's wisdom is the application of God's word until you become a national ministry. You will become a nationally recognized minister through the wisdom of God.

David was full of the wisdom of God. Because he behaved himself wisely, he gradually gained national status. Through the wisdom of God, you will become a national hero. Your ministry will soon be recognized in your nation. Through the wisdom of God, you are going to rise from being a community leader to a city leader to a regional leader and then a national leader. Only the wisdom of God can turn a nobody into a national hero.

How to Become a National Hero through the Wisdom of God

1. Respect the special love that is shown you and you will become a national figure.

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

1 Samuel 18:1

Jonathan loved David! David was a commoner! Prince Jonathan, a member of the royal family, had taken a special interest in David.

This special love and interest must be appreciated and valued. You would think that everyone would appreciate love when it is given. That is not the case! Have people appreciated the love of Jesus? The answer is "No"!

Has this world returned the love of God with love?

The answer is "No"! Many people do not know how to respond to love. It is a reality you will grow to discover.

When you respect the love that is shown to you, you receive more love.

The more love you receive, the higher you will go. Many people do not respect the love that is shown to them.

Some of the people I have loved have returned my love with flatness.

Some of the people that I have loved have returned my love with hatred.

Some of the people I have loved returned my love with treachery.

Because they did not appreciate the love that was shown them, they ended up being cast away as profane branches.

2. Respect the special access that is given to you and you will become a national figure.

And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more home to his father's house.

1 Samuel 18:2

Respect the access that is given to you and you will learn a lot! It is a great privilege to have access to a great person. The access given to you can be a stepping-stone for you to become a great person and a national hero.

When you despise the special access that is given to you, you can become a monster. You can also become proud because of the special access that is given to you.

One day, a sister was honoured to receive a special job. Because of her work she was given special access to her pastor. She had the opportunity to work closer than other people. She saw many of the inner workings of the ministry. One day somebody asked her a question about her pastor whom she worked with. He wanted to know what he was like in real life.

She sarcastically remarked, "Oh, I know that man very well. He is five hundred per cent inquisitive about everything."

This was not a nice remark nor was it a compliment. This lady had taken her special access for granted. That is why she would venture to make such a remark about her father.

Many people would have liked to work in her position. They just did not have the access she had. Like Lucifer who was the anointed cherub that covered the throne, she had rubbished the special entrance that was given to her. When people rubbish the closeness they are given, it is often taken away from them forever.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

Psalm 65:4

3. Respect the covenants and agreements that you have made and you will become a national hero.

Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

1 Samuel 18:3

Respect your marital covenant. Respect covenants of privacy and secrecy that you have made so that you are a man whose word can be trusted.

As soon as it is discovered that you cannot keep a covenant, you will lose everything you have.

You will not become a national hero, nor will you receive national recognition because no one can trust you. Your word is good for nothing. Your promises are meaningless and therefore you cannot become a national hero.

4. Respect the gifts that you are given and you will become a national minister.

And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle.

1 Samuel 18:4

A wicked person does not respect the gifts that he is given. David could have trivialised the gifts he was given and said, "Jonathan gave me a second-hand robe." He could even have said, "Jonathan gave me his old sword because he has a new one that is far better."

Your attitude towards a gift reveals a lot about your character. Some people do not even say, "Thank you."

One day, I gave a young couple a gift; but they never said "Thank you" to me. Ingratitude reveals presumption and wickedness lurking beneath the smiles and politeness.

5. Respect the small errands and missions you are sent to do and you will become a national minister.

And David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely: and Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

1 Samuel 18:5

David went wherever Saul sent him. Whatever you are asked to do, just do it. You will discover that God will use the various errands and missions of your life to give you experience and the fortitude that you will need.

6. Overcome the problems of a successful person and you will become a national figure.

And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.

1 Samuel 18:8-9

You must overcome the unsolicited jealousy, hatred and rivalry that come to those who are successful in God's kingdom. Overcoming jealousy and animosity are part of the journey to becoming a national hero.

7. Continue using your gift when you experience promotion and you will go even higher.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.

1 Samuel 18:10

Continuing to use your gifts will lead to even greater promotion. David played the harp just as he played at other times. It was that small and insignificant musical gift that made David great and is still making him great today. Today, David's psalms are read across the whole world. Most people in the world have heard of the psalms of David.

I began preaching and teaching the word of God when I was in secondary school. I have been preaching and teaching for many years. Today, I am experiencing certain blessings because I am a preacher and a teacher of the word of God. It is this same gift of preaching and teaching that has brought me this far.

Many people do not realise how their apparently little talents have brought them very far.

Many people put aside the gift that God has given to them because they trivialise and minimise the grace of God in their lives.

8. Overcome the evil that is thrown at you and you will become a national minister.

And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice. And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people.

1 Samuel 18:11-13

Evil attacks of envy, hatred and death were hurled at David. He overcame the evil by avoiding it. He evaded the relentless attacks of King Saul. It is important that you learn how to avoid certain things without confronting them directly. There are times you are expected to overcome evil by directly confronting it. There are certain evils that you simply need to avoid.

There is no need to confront a father. There is no need to fight a father figure. Simply avoid his jealous attacks. Trust God to outlive these dangerous, sometimes demonized, personalities and bear fruit in spite of their attacks.

9. Respect the need to be a good example and you will become a national figure.

And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

1 Samuel 18:14-16

CHAPTER 12

Wisdom Will Make You Ten Times Better than the Others

AS FOR THESE FOUR CHILDREN, GOD GAVE THEM KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN ALL LEARNING AND WISDOM: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. AND IN ALL MATTERS OF WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING, THAT THE KING ENQUIRED OF THEM, HE FOUND THEM TEN TIMES BETTER THAN ALL THE MAGICIANS AND ASTROLOGERS THAT WERE IN ALL HIS REALM. And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus.

Daniel 1:17-21

God wants you to be a good example of many things. You can become a good example to the church, the community, the village and the town. Be an example in faith, in purity, in holiness, in love, in forgiveness and in obedience.

You can be ten times better than every other minister in your category.

What is going to distinguish you from the others? Your wisdom!

What is going to make a difference in your ministry? Your wisdom!

The wisdom of God is the master key for you to be distinguished from your colleagues. Daniel and his three colleagues were found to be ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers of the time.

Do you want to have a ministry that is ten times better?

Your opportunity to have a ministry that is ten times better is here. The wisdom of God is the principal thing. Wisdom is profitable to direct you.

How do you receive wisdom that will distinguish you from the others? The answer is simple: if anyone lacks wisdom let him ask! (James 1:5) You must learn to ask God extensively for wisdom.

Look at the scripture above. It says *"God gave them knowledge and skill and learning and wisdom."*

It is God who gives you wisdom that will distinguish you from your colleagues. It is God who will give you wisdom that will make you ten times better than your colleagues.

Praying for wisdom and revelation should be one of the most important prayers of your life.

God is the One who gave the four children the wisdom they had. God made them ten times better and God is going to make you ten times better too. Wisdom is the Spirit! The Spirit of wisdom is a real spirit! The more you pray for this Spirit of wisdom, the more you will receive.

I have prayed for the Spirit of wisdom for many years. I believe the Spirit of wisdom and revelation really affects the way I think. Let most of your prayers centre on praying for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation.

If any of you lack wisdom, LET HIM ASK OF GOD, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

How to Acquire the Wisdom that Will Make You Ten Times Better

1. Pray for the Holy Spirit in general.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 11:13

Praying for the Holy Spirit is very important. This prayer will make God release the Holy Spirit into your life. Most Christians do not pray for the Holy Spirit. They pray for many things from God. Christians ask God for many things except the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "If you as parents know how to give good things to children, God as a parent will equally know how to give the Holy Spirit to His children."

2. Pray specifically for the Spirit of wisdom.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

Isaiah 11:2

3. Pray for the Spirit of revelation.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you THE SPIRIT OF wisdom and REVELATION in the knowledge of him:

Ephesians 1:17

4. Pray specifically for the Spirit of understanding.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, THE SPIRIT OF wisdom and UNDERSTANDING, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

Isaiah 11:2

5. Pray specifically for the Spirit of counsel.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, THE SPIRIT OF COUNSEL and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;

Isaiah 11:2

6. Pray specifically for the Spirit of knowledge.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, THE SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE and of the fear of the Lord;

Isaiah 11:2

7. Pray specifically for the Spirit of a sound mind.

For God hath not given us THE SPIRIT of fear; but of power, and of love, and OF A SOUND MIND.

2 Timothy 1:7

8. Pray for the Spirit of the fear of the Lord.

And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of THE FEAR OF THE LORD;

Isaiah 11:2

9. Pray specifically for the Spirit of humility.

Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 16:19

A humble spirit is the Spirit of humility! The spirit that is at work in your life forms your mind and thoughts. Praying for the Spirit of humility is praying to have the mind that was in Christ. Let this mind be in you. The Spirit that was in Christ made Christ a very humble person. Today, as you pray for the Spirit of humility, your thoughts will become thoughts of humility.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, HE humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Philippians 2:5-8

10. Pray specifically for the Spirit of holiness.

And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

Romans 1:4-5

11. Pray specifically for the spirit of love.

For God hath not given us THE SPIRIT of fear; but of power, and OF LOVE, and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:7

12. Pray specifically for the Spirit of Christ.

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, he is none of his.

Romans 8:9

CHAPTER 13

Wisdom Will Make You Catch Up with Those Ahead

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; EVEN AS OUR BELOVED BROTHER PAUL ALSO ACCORDING TO THE WISDOM GIVEN UNTO HIM HATH WRITTEN UNTO YOU; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

2 Peter 3:14-16

Wisdom is the master key to catching up and overtaking all those who were there before you in ministry. The apostle Paul was given special wisdom from God and it is this wisdom that we see in his letters to the churches.

Paul is the best example of someone who caught up with those ahead of him. Wisdom is the master key for catching up with your seniors. Paul did not have the opportunity to meet Jesus personally. He did not have the privilege that the other twelve disciples had. Paul did not see five thousand people being fed. Paul did not see the sick being healed. Neither did he see the dead being raised. Yet, God used him even more than He used the other disciples.

How did Paul catch up with the ministers that were ahead of him? What did he do to bridge the gap? What did he do to overcome this great handicap of not seeing Jesus in person?

Paul's master key was the key of wisdom. Peter acknowledged that Paul had been given special wisdom. The special wisdom Paul had been given made him write books and catch up with those who had been apostles before him. The special wisdom to catch up with those ahead of you is called "the catching-up wisdom". The catching-up wisdom has two components. The first component is the wisdom of walking in the grace of God and the second component is the wisdom of working harder than those ahead of you.

What is The Catching-Up Wisdom?

1. The catching-up wisdom is to walk in the grace that you have been given.

For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. BUT BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM: AND HIS GRACE WHICH WAS BESTOWED UPON ME WAS NOT IN VAIN; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

Apostle Paul revealed the wisdom that God gave him to catch up with the other apostles.

Walk in the grace of God! Many people do not walk in the grace that they have been given. The grace you have been given is the gift that you have. Many people leave the grace that they have and try to do what others are doing. Instead of trying to be like someone else, find out what grace you have received from God. When you walk in the grace of God, you walk in your gift and you stay in your calling.

Years ago, I discovered that I had the grace to hold camp meetings and to teach people to become leaders and pastors in the house of God. Through this grace, I was able to raise up many young pastors and workers. I noticed that other ministers were holding powerful conventions with great manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

I was secretly jealous of these people and wanted to be like them because they were so powerful. But I sensed the Holy Spirit encouraging me to simply walk in the grace that He has given me. I decided to walk in my grace and carry on training people in small groups. Today, I am enjoying the fruit of having planted thousands of churches. If I had left the grace of God and gone on to other things, I would not have been able to catch up with those ahead of me. Walking in the grace of God is the catching-up wisdom that you need.

2. The catching-up wisdom is to work harder than all those around you.

> **For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; BUT I LABOURED MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN THEY ALL: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.**
>
> **1 Corinthians 15:9-10**

The catching-up wisdom of Paul was to work harder than everybody else. Paul laboured more than all the other apostles. He put in more time and more effort. Most people do not give persevering attention to the work of God. Many people are not constant in their efforts to accomplish great things for God.

Apostle Paul was persistent and constant in his efforts until he died. Even in prison he was writing letters that are read today. His hard work is felt through reading his letters. You can sense his constant and tireless labour for the church. You can feel his diligent work through these letters.

Even before Paul came on the scene, Solomon had told us the effect of hard, constant effort. Hard work and constant efforts always yield much fruit.

> **Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.**
>
> **Proverbs 22:29**

It is time to labour more abundantly than everyone else! Apostle Paul did not labour less than everyone else. He worked more than everyone else!

That is the key to catching up!

Work hard! Do not expect to amount to anything if you do not work very hard.

It is time to study more than anyone else!

It is time to pray more than anyone else!

It is time to fast more than the average person!

It is time to travel more than anyone else!

It is time to preach more than anyone else!

It is time to teach!

It is time to labour for the Lord!

It is time to work day and night!

You will soon be catching up with those far ahead of you.

CHAPTER 14

Wisdom is the Secret to Your Financial Sufficiency In Ministry

But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Job 28:12-19

Most ministers struggle to have enough money. Money is often a problem for churches and ministries. There is good news today!

Wisdom is the custodian of the money and riches you need to fulfil your ministry.

Wisdom is the master key to becoming rich in a durable, genuine and lasting way, without debts.

Wisdom is the key to having supernatural sufficiency in a way that will last beyond your generation. Durable riches are the riches that come without debt. Solomon was given wisdom from God. The wisdom that Solomon had made him the richest man that ever lived. There was none like him before his time and there will never be anyone that could be compared to him.

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that THERE WAS NONE LIKE THEE BEFORE THEE, NEITHER AFTER THEE SHALL ANY ARISE LIKE UNTO THEE. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

1 Kings 3:12-13

Seven Effects of God's Wisdom on Your Finances

1. Wisdom will cause riches to accompany you.

RICHES AND HONOUR ARE WITH ME; yea, durable riches and righteousness.

Proverbs 8:18

If you have wisdom you will have riches. Riches and honour are with wisdom. Once you have wisdom you will have riches. The lack of finances for your ministry reveals a certain lack of wisdom. There is a way that you are thinking that is causing poverty. Your mind and thoughts are not working in the right way. Be humble and ask God to show you what to do. Ask God to

give you the Spirit of wisdom and understanding. Pray for it every day and the way you think will soon change. It is time to believe in wisdom!

The difference between poor countries and rich countries is the way the leaders of these nations think. Poor nations have leaders who think in a certain way. Their thoughts, and therefore, their actions cause entire nations to live in poverty. Receive supernatural wisdom from God and begin to have a way of thinking that generates wealth.

2. Wisdom will make your riches last.

Riches and honour are with me; yea, DURABLE RICHES and righteousness.

Proverbs 8:18

There are many people who come by wealth but are unable to sustain it. Why do famous footballers and stars end up broke? There is a long list of people who were once wealthy but are living in deep poverty today.

Wisdom will deliver into your hands lasting and durable riches. Get the wisdom of God now and you will experience wealth in your youth, your middle age and in your old age.

Through the wisdom of God, you will not sit at home as an old man hoping that one of your children will remember to bring you some soap and food for the week. Through wisdom, you will have durable riches in your old age and you will continue to be an old man who can give generously.

3. Wisdom will make your riches connected to righteousness.

I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

Proverbs 8:20

A lot of wealth is connected to evil. Many rich people acquired their wealth by committing atrocities. Many gold mines were built through cheating people. Many businesses started out by doing illegitimate activities and converting them into legitimate businesses.

Many restaurants sold bad, unwholesome food till they were found out. Many factories manufactured cheap defective items till they were found out. Many banks were started with stolen wealth. Many slaves have been used to generate wealth for their wicked masters. Many people died to generate wealth for families that have now invested the wealth in international banks. Many wars have been fought in order to steal money and wealth from others.

There are chains of hotels that were originally built from stolen money. Many politicians robbed their nations of millions and then directed their ill-gotten wealth into banks, hotels, estates, mines, factories, malls and other companies.

The wisdom of God, on the other hand, will connect your riches to righteousness. Everything that you ever have will be connected to God and to your righteous life. You will never be called a murderer or a thief!

4. Wisdom will make you substantial in wealth.

I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I WILL FILL THEIR TREASURES.

Proverbs 8:20-21

Through the wisdom of God, your wealth will be substantial. There are many people who have wealth that is not substantial. They have parties, celebrations and many sports cars. These things are not real wealth. Real wealth goes beyond buying drinks and food for a hundred people. Your wealth will be substantial and durable. God will fill your treasures through wisdom.

5. Wisdom will cause your bank accounts and storerooms to be filled.

I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

Proverbs 8:20-21

The wisdom of God will cause your storerooms to be filled. Every kind of storage place will be overflowing. Your banks, your wallets, your wardrobes, your pockets and your kitchen storeroom will overflow through the wisdom of God.

6. A gift of wisdom is better than a gift of silver. A gift of a word of wisdom is profitable for direction. When you know what to do, you will have much more than a piece of silver jewellery.

My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

Proverbs 8:19

7. A gift of wisdom is better than a gift of gold. When you know what to do, you will have much more than a gold bar.

How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

Proverbs 16:16

8. Wisdom will be more valuable to you than any jewellery.

A gift of a word of wisdom is profitable for direction. When you know what to do, you will have much more than diamonds and rubies.

She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

Proverbs 3:15

9. Wisdom will give you every thing that you will ever desire, no matter how expensive it is. There will be no car or house that you cannot have if you have wisdom. When you have the wisdom of God, all your desires will be met. You will see many things that people desire, and you will know that God has given you all things.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Proverbs 8:11

10. Wisdom will cause all the needs of your ministry to be met. Through wisdom, you will have everything you need.

Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

Proverbs 8:18-21

CHAPTER 15

Wisdom Is the Secret to Creativity in the Ministry

The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

Proverbs 3:19

O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

Psalm 104:24

I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

Proverbs 8:12

The wisdom of God makes you a creative person. It is the secret that will stir up your creativity. Allow the wisdom of God to seep into you. Wisdom makes you create new things. Wisdom is what stimulates creativity, inventions, innovations and the new things you need for your ministry to move forward in leaps and bounds. Wisdom is the master key to becoming a creator of new things and new ideas for ministry and work.

Seven Ways to Walk in Creative Wisdom

1. WALK CLOSER TO GOD and you will become more creative and wise.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

God is the creator! Every time you become more creative you are closer to God. Walking closer with God will cause you to be more creative. The wisdom of creativity causes you to walk closer to God. God is the creator of heaven and earth. Whenever you walk in the spirit of creativity, you walk closer to God.

2. WELCOME NEW IDEAS and you will become more creative and wise.

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:19

The wisdom of creativity will cause you to welcome new ideas into your life and ministry. There are new ideas that will make a difference in your life and ministry.

3. TRY NEW THINGS and you will become more creative and wise.

The wisdom of creativity will cause you to try new things in your life and ministry.

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:19

4. WELCOME NEW PEOPLE and you will become more creative and wise.

The wisdom of creativity will cause you to welcome new people into your world.

In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 8:13

5. GO OUT INTO A NEW WORLD and you will become more creative and wise.

The Holy Spirit will lead you to go out into the world. You know only a small part of the world. The wisdom of creativity will cause you to go out into the world that is new to you in fulfilment of the Great Commission. The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of creativity and He always leads us to do new things.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:19-20

6. GIVE NEW NAMES TO PEOPLE and you will be more creative and wise. The wisdom of creativity will cause you to give new names to people.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:18

Giving names to people gives them a new life. A new name creates a new personality. Old things are passed away. The person with the new name begins to take on the character of the name that is given to them. Peter took on a new character. His old name, Simon, signified someone who was unstable and weak. His new name, Peter, spoke of stability of a rock.

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:19-20

7. START NEW CHURCHES, CHOIRS, GROUPS, MINISTRIES and you will be operating in creativity and wisdom. God is the author of many new things. God is always doing new things.

The wisdom of creativity will cause you to start new ministries, new choirs and new groups. Beginning new things is a sign of the spirit of creativity.

CHAPTER 16

Wisdom Turns You into A Practical Person

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And FIVE OF THEM WERE WISE, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

Matthew 25:1-3

The story of the five wise virgins and five foolish virgins is the story of how some people applied practical wisdom in their lives and ended up achieving their aims. The word "Wisdom" is the word "*Phronimos*" and it speaks of being practical and hands-on.

Wisdom is the capacity to be practical and down to earth. The five virgins who did not make it to the wedding were those who were not practical enough to buy extra oil.

Some people consider themselves above everyday, down-to-earth activities. If you want to walk in the wisdom of God, you must become an everyday down-to-earth person. If you read the bible, you will find a lot of down to earth instructions. There is no practical aspect of life that God has left out of the bible. You have God's counsel for every aspect of your life; from the day you are born till the day you die.

Wisdom is the capacity to be practical. Today, many leaders sit in their castles, not knowing what is actually happening on the ground. You can be a practical person even though you are the head of a large organisation.

I remember a government minister in a certain country who had oversight of the nation's harbour. One day, his country was visited by a delegation from the World Bank. The delegation from the World Bank wanted to see the harbour. When the World Bank delegates arrived with him at the harbour, the government minister blurted out, "This is the first time I am seeing the harbour"! Even though he had been in charge of this very important national asset, he had not bothered to go and see what was happening there. He had been the minister in charge of the harbour for eight years! Such leaders are not practical hands-on men. When they are in charge, you can expect things to fall apart. They only receive invoices and bills of expenses that they do not understand. They approve everything because they do not know what is false.

They sign out millions of dollars because they do not know that what they are asking for can be done with a few thousands.

Wisdom is the application of practical steps to your calling in such a way that you fulfil your ministry. Wisdom is the ability to be a practical person.

Many people have failed in their ministry because they did not develop in the wisdom of being practical.

I remember four different men of God whom I interacted with. I gave each of them a piece of advice. I gave them advice on how to live their lives and on how to avoid evil. I sensed that satan had planned to sift them like wheat, and each piece of advice was uniquely designed to practically deliver them from falling headlong into satan's hands. I wished all of the four of them had listened to me; but that was not the case. Two of them heeded the practical advice that I gave to them; but the other two despised me.

Two of them gave me feedback that the steps I had given them had practically saved their lives. On the other hand, the two other pastors did not take heed to my advice. In fact, both of them went on to ridicule me. One of them was so incensed at my advice that he called a meeting of his friends and spoke angrily about me. The other pastor also called some friends and ridiculed me because of the advice I had given him.

Some years later, I heard of their destruction and I marvelled to myself at how people do not believe in practical wisdom. Indeed, many things in the ministry require practical steps that must be followed. The foolish virgins were simply not practical enough to buy the extra oil they needed to make it to the end.

The reason why people do not fulfil the Great Commission is because they are not practical. God may have told you to go out into the world to preach the gospel; but you will need to do practical things if you are to fulfil this holy calling. No one has achieved great things in the ministry without practical wisdom.

Many years ago I learnt some practical things from Billy Graham. I read a book in which he described how their crusades were conducted. He described how he would send teams ahead into the cities where he would be holding crusades. Sometimes, he would let preparatory teams live for two years in the city where they were planning to have a crusade. Sometimes the crusade preparatory crusade teams would spend several months in preparation. I realised that Billy Graham had a very practical approach to preparing for a crusade. Billy Graham did not just arrive at a crusade ground and expect the whole world to appear at the stadium. Today, many men of God think that they can just arrive in a city and everyone would be interested in them.

I also learnt from Oral Roberts about the need to have partners and supporters for crusades. He spoke about how it was necessary to constantly raise money to preach the gospel. He said he wished that it were not necessary to constantly raise money to hold crusades. I learnt how he kept a close relationship with his partners and board members who helped him to have crusades. These great men had a very practical side to their ministries.

CHAPTER 17

Wisdom is the Secret to Catching the Anointing

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, THERE CAME WISE MEN FROM THE EAST TO JERUSALEM, SAYING, WHERE IS HE THAT IS BORN KING OF THE JEWS? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Matthew 2:1-3

The wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, looking for the saviour. Their wisdom made them seek the saviour. The whole world remembers these wise men because they looked for Jesus. Wisdom will make you find the anointed person and his anointing.

It is a supreme act of wisdom to seek for the anointing. God recognizes the journey you make when you seek for the anointing.

One day, I decided to go and wait upon the Lord. To do that, I had to travel to the wilderness. As I was preparing to go, the Holy Spirit began to speak to me, giving me direction on what to do in the future. On another occasion I was also travelling to wait on the Lord somewhere. I noticed how I began to receive supernatural direction before I arrived at my destination. Then I realised that my journeys to go and wait on the Lord were recognized by the Holy Spirit. Even the decision to go and pray was a prayer! Each journey was noted by the Lord and respected by the Holy Spirit.

You will notice how Jesus recommended the Queen of the South for coming all the way to hear the wisdom of Solomon. This queen travelled from the uttermost parts of the earth just to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Indeed, your travels are recognized by God as an act of wisdom.

The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 12:42

Wisdom will cause you to seek for the Saviour. The wisdom of God will make you travel to find God. When you see a man travelling far to find the treasures of the anointing, you are seeing a wise man.

There are people who will not even go to the church in their neighbourhood. Such people may travel far to watch a football game but will not lift a finger for spiritual things.

One day, I asked after some missing church members. I found out that they had travelled to Germany for the weekend to watch a World Cup soccer match.

Wisdom is the art of downloading the invisible things of God into this human world. Through

wisdom, the things of God will not remain unreal. God is real! God is in heaven!

Wisdom is the application of God's word to locate the man of God who will practically help you to know God.

People who are not practical never see God nor experience him.

> Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say. And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. AND HE SHALL BE THY SPOKESMAN UNTO THE PEOPLE: AND HE SHALL BE, EVEN HE SHALL BE TO THEE INSTEAD OF A MOUTH, AND THOU SHALT BE TO HIM INSTEAD OF GOD.
>
> Exodus 4:12-16

God has ordained people for you to see, touch and handle. These are the people you will see instead of seeing God Himself.

It is not easy to see God himself. We are so far from God! There is nothing about us that deserves to know God or see God. We are desperate sinners. God is so great and he is in the third heavens. You are on earth now! When are you going to get to the third heavens, where God dwells?

If you do not have the wisdom of seeking the people who can link you up with God, you will never experience God practically.

The wisdom of God turns you into a seeker of the anointing!

CHAPTER 18

Wisdom Knows the Times

YEA, THE STORK IN THE HEAVEN KNOWETH HER APPOINTED TIMES; AND THE TURTLE AND THE CRANE AND THE SWALLOW OBSERVE THE TIME OF THEIR COMING; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord. HOW DO YE SAY, WE ARE WISE, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain.

Jeremiah 8:7-8

In the scripture above, we see how different animals know the times and the seasons. The stork, the turtle, the crane and the swallow know the time of day. They know that it is time to move from one place to another. The prophet Jeremiah asked an important question: "If the people of God do not know the time of their judgment, how can they claim to be wise?"

Indeed, a wise man knows the time and seasons. You must know the times and seasons in your life. You must understand what God is doing with you at any particular time. It is wise to understand what is happening so that you can flow along with God.

Jesus was someone who knew the timings of God.

Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready.

John 7:6

It is wisdom to flow with the timings of God.

There are times that God is breaking things up.

There are times that God is bringing judgment.

There are times that God is bringing revelation.

There are times that God is bringing church growth.

You must flow along with what God is doing. In the ministry of Jesus you see different seasons. Jesus understood the seasons when God was working with Him. Jesus was full of wisdom!

1. Recognize a time of recruitment.

Jesus knew that it was time for the recruitment of special people who would be the pillars of His ministry.

During this season, Jesus recruited many people and many people joined Jesus' ministry during this period. These were the pillars of His ministry. During this season of recruitment, almost everybody he encountered was to become a foundational member of his ministry.

Now as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

Mark 1:16-19

2. Recognize a time of power.

Jesus knew that it was time for a season of power.

During this season, Jesus experienced the greatest miracles and manifestations of power. In the fifth chapter of Mark alone, we see the season of miracle power.

In one eventful day, Jesus cast the demons out of the mad man of Gadara. Then he proceeded to Jairus' house to raise the dead. On the way to Jairus' house he healed the woman with the issue of blood. Three notable miracles occurred in one day of Jesus' ministry.

By the end of the sixth chapter of Mark, the whole region was carrying sick people on their beds to the streets where Jesus would pass by.

And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

Mark 6:55-56

3. Recognize a time of offenses.

Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

John 6:60-61, 66-69

Expect a season of offenses. It is a season of trouble. It is a season you will not enjoy. You must recognise that it is a season and it will pass.

There was a season in the ministry of Jesus when many people were offended.

There will be a season in your ministry where people will be offended at you.

You must accept that there are seasons and times for all these things. In your walk with Jesus, you will experience everything that Jesus experienced. If you are really following Jesus, you will see everything that Jesus saw.

4. Recognize the time of disciples.

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because

the Jews sought to kill him.

John 7:1

Jesus knew that it was time for training disciples privately.

From the sixth chapter of John, Jesus' following drastically reduced. Masses of people forsook him. Many people were offended by his teaching. People could not stand his teachings any more. Jesus was left with His twelve disciples. There is a time of your ministry where you must concentrate on the leadership and not on the masses.

5. Recognize a time of betrayal.

> And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.
>
> Mark 14:27-31

Expect a season of treachery. It is a season of trouble. It is a season you will not enjoy. You must recognise the season of betrayal. This is something you must go through. Jesus went through it.

Count it all joy when you experience various trials and temptations. If you have been betrayed by one of your closest disciples, then you are getting nearer to the place where Jesus was.

There comes a time in the ministry when you must experience betrayal, desertion and treachery. During this season you will meet Judas who will sell you to the enemy.

You will also meet Peter who will say big things but will not keep to his word. You will meet disciples who will desert you in spite of all their training and experiences.

Jesus knew that it was the time for betrayal.

He accepted it and knew that many of His disciples would not make the standard.

6. Recognize a time of sacrifice.

> **And Jesus answered them, saying, THE HOUR IS COME, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.**
>
> **John 12:23-24**

There is a time to sacrifice. It is not the time to receive gifts. It is not the time to be honoured. It is not the time to become wealthy. It is a time to lay down your life and go low in everything until the time that God exalts you.

Jesus experienced a time of going low and disappearing from this earth in shame. It was a time that would lead to His final exaltation.

Today, Jesus is worthy to receive honour and glory and power and riches because he laid down his life when it was time to do so.

7. Recognize a time of evil.

When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

Luke 22:53

There is a time where evil is allowed to triumph over good. This is mysterious but God works in a mysterious way.

As the mysteries of God unfold, you will discover seasons where evil is allowed to prevail over God's people.

Jesus said, "This is your hour and the power of darkness." In other words, this is the time for evil to prevail.

Maybe you are going through such a season. Do not be disheartened. I have some good news for you. Every evil that is working in your life has an expiry date. There is a set time within which evil is allowed to work in your life. After that set time it will not work any more. You must overcome the evil day!

In the book of Revelation, we see how the believers in Smyrna were to be tested for ten days. After ten days the tribulation would be over! Satan has not been give free access to torment Christians indefinitely. Your crisis is coming to an end very soon!

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Revelation 2:10

Also, you will notice how the temple and the holy city were given to the Gentiles to trample upon. Even though it was a season of evil for the Holy City, it was limited to forty-two months.

But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

Revelation 11:2

When the dragon and the beast arose in the book of Revelation, they spoke great things and blasphemed God's servants. However, their blasphemy was also limited to forty-two months. The wickedness of satan against your life and ministry will be cut short! Satan's ability to torment your life will expire shortly!

And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

Revelation 13:5

CHAPTER 19

The Proofs of Your Wisdom

But wisdom is proved right by all her children.

Luke 7:35 (NIV)

What proves that you are a wise man? In this chapter, I want to show you, out of scripture, some things that you must look for when you are looking for evidence of wisdom. This list of proofs is based on clear and unambiguous scriptures. I believe that all these proofs will soon be found in your life! Every single one of these proofs must be associated with your life and ministry.

Ask yourself whether these twelve things are found in your life. Is there promotion in your life? Is there honour in your life? Is there promotion in your life? Is there happiness in your life? Is there pleasantness in your life? Is there peace in your life? Is there treasure in your life? Do you have long life? Do you have the ability to lead people? Are there riches and honour in your life? Is there righteousness in your life? Have you built anything in your life? Are you creative?

This is an important checklist. Each and every one of these twelve things are proofs of wisdom. God's word is your guiding post! It must be your aim to be a wise man. People must point to you and say, "That is a man of wisdom." But there must be proofs of your wisdom.

The Proofs of Wisdom

1. Promotion is a proof of your wisdom.

Exalt her, and she shall PROMOTE THEE: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

Proverbs 4:8

2. Honour is a proof of your wisdom.

Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to HONOUR, when thou dost embrace her.

Proverbs 4:8

3. Happiness is a proof of your wisdom.

She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and HAPPY is every one that retaineth her.

Proverbs 3:18

4. Pleasantness is a proof of your wisdom.

Her ways are ways of PLEASANTNESS, and all her paths are peace.

Proverbs 3:17

5. Peace is a proof of your wisdom.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are PEACE.

Proverbs 3:17

6. Treasures and substance are proofs of your wisdom.

That I may cause those that love me to inherit SUBSTANCE; and I will fill their treasures.

Proverbs 8:21

7. Long life is a proof of your wisdom.

Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and THE YEARS OF THY LIFE SHALL BE MANY.

Proverbs 4:10

8. The ability to lead and rule is proof of your wisdom.

By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

Proverbs 8:15

9. Riches with honour are proofs of your wisdom.

RICHES AND HONOUR are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.

Proverbs 8:18

10. Riches with righteousness are proofs of your wisdom.

Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Proverbs 8:18

11. The things you have built are proofs of your wisdom.

THROUGH WISDOM IS AN HOUSE BUILDED; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches

Proverbs 24:3-4

12. Your creativity is proof of your wisdom.

THE LORD CREATED THE EARTH BY HIS WISDOM; by his knowledge he set the sky in place.

Proverbs 3:19 (GNB)

CHAPTER 20

Wisdom Increases by Hearing

A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

Proverbs 1:5

Wisdom comes to you by hearing. The more you listen to messages the wiser you will become. The more you listen to fathers the wiser you will become. The more you listen to pastors the wiser you will become. As you listen to preaching, you will become wiser.

When you listen to a wise person speaking you receive an impartation of wisdom.

Five People Who Will Increase Your Wisdom

1. Your wisdom will increase when you hear from God.

And it shall come to pass, IF THOU SHALT HEARKEN DILIGENTLY UNTO THE VOICE OF THE LORD THY GOD, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:

Deuteronomy 28:1

A wise man will hear and increase learning! It is important to wait on the Lord and hear from God directly. A person who never hears from God will never have a certain level of wisdom. As you hear from God directly, your wisdom increases and you get promoted because of your wisdom.

2. Your wisdom will increase when you hear from your prophet.

NOW THEREFORE HEARKEN, O ISRAEL, UNTO THE STATUTES AND UNTO THE JUDGMENTS, WHICH I TEACH YOU, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day. BEHOLD, I HAVE TAUGHT YOU STATUTES AND JUDGMENTS, EVEN AS THE LORD MY GOD COMMANDED ME, THAT YE SHOULD DO SO IN THE LAND WHITHER YE GO TO POSSESS IT. KEEP THEREFORE AND DO THEM; FOR THIS IS YOUR WISDOM AND YOUR UNDERSTANDING IN THE SIGHT OF THE NATIONS, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.

Deuteronomy 4:1-6

A wise man will hear and increase learning! It is important to hear from your prophet!

Great wisdom is going to come into your life as you allow God to bless you through your apostle and prophet.

Moses gave the Israelites their laws and the commandments. He told them "These statutes and laws are your wisdom." In other words, the more they listened to his words, the more they would have wisdom from God.

3. Your wisdom will increase when you hear from your father.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding.

Proverbs 2:1-2

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

Proverbs 3:1

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

Proverbs 4:1

My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding:

Proverbs 5:1

A wise man will hear and increase learning! Many children do not hear the wisdom of their fathers. A rebellious child will not have the opportunity to sit down with his father and hear him speak. Because disobedient, rebellious and dishonourable children do not ever have conversations with their fathers, they rarely hear from them. They rarely hear the wisdom that their fathers have to offer.

I once met an old man who had a large family. Indeed, this man had several rebellious children who would make fun of their father, as though he were a buffoon. As I got to know this man, I found out first hand how great and wise he was.

Every time I attended a function where the old man was to speak, I noticed the disdain with which his children referred to him and his speeches. As I listened quietly, I noticed that the old man was full of wisdom but his children did not hear him nor did they receive his wisdom.

Over the years, I realised that none of his children have attained to the level of financial stability that their father had. It is important to increase in wisdom by hearing your father.

4. Your wisdom will increase when you hear from your mother.

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not THE LAW OF THY MOTHER: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

Proverbs 6:20-22

A wise man will hear and increase learning! It is also important to listen to your mother. There is a difference between mothers and fathers. The wisdom that comes from a father may be very

different from the wisdom that comes from a mother. Somehow, both mothers and fathers contribute greatly to your wisdom.

5. Your wisdom will increase when you hear from your pastor.

And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Jeremiah 3:15

A wise man will hear and increase learning! There is a great promise for those who hear their pastors. God promises to give us pastors who will feed us with knowledge and understanding. God will feed you and make you fat through your pastor.

CHAPTER 21

Wisdom Increases through Books

IN THE FIRST YEAR OF HIS REIGN I DANIEL UNDERSTOOD BY BOOKS the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:2

There are books that will greatly increase your wisdom. Instead of remaining in darkness, you will move into the light. Your life will change when you study certain books. Daniel, the prophet gained great understanding by reading books. If Daniel the prophet who saw visions of heaven, needed to have books to increase his understanding, so will you. You are going to receive understanding from books.

Seven Books that Increased My Wisdom

1. "*Plead Your Case*[1]" by Kenneth Hagin

From a little book entitled "Plead Your Case[1]" by Kenneth Hagin, I increased in wisdom. Through this little book, I sensed how real heaven is. I also came to believe that my prayers were being heard directly in heaven. When you believe in prayer you truly become a wise man. This little book helped me to believe in prayer.

2. "*I believe in Visions*[2]" by Kenneth Hagin

There is a book called, "I believe in Visions[2]" by Kenneth Hagin. Through this book, I received a lot of revelation and wisdom for the ministry. I cannot share all the different things that I learnt because they are so many amazing revelations and pieces of wisdom to receive from this book. It is just amazing to hear that Jesus Christ Himself would appear to a real person who is on earth today.

I learnt about how important it is to focus on the ministry. In one vision, Kenneth Hagin was told that he would not have lived beyond the age of fifty-five if he continued to place the teaching ministry above the prophetic ministry. I received great wisdom and prayed earnestly to be able to cross the age of fifty-five.

In this book, I also received wisdom on how to use both medical science and spiritual power to overcome sickness and disease. I found out that the great prophet, Kenneth Hagin, was on admission in the hospital and the Lord appeared to him right there. The Lord said to him to always pray for people who are in hospital. Prayer changes things for people who are on admission in the hospital.

In another vision, I learnt how demons affected a pastor's wife and led to a divorce. I realised that demon activity is real amongst ministers and their wives.

3. "*The Final Quest*[3]" by Rick Joyner

Perhaps, the book that affected my life more than any other would be "The Final Quest[3]" by Rick Joyner. This book, along with its sequels "The Call" and "The Torch and the Sword" have had an amazing impact on my level of wisdom.

I received wisdom for eternal judgment as I read about pastors who had died and gone on to eternity. One of the stories stood out for me. This was about a pastor who had a conflict with his spiritual sons. God had called him to be a father to many sons. He was expected to overlook the rebellion of his children. In heaven, he was judged because he did not act as a father and overlook the rebellion of his spiritual sons. I received wisdom to be careful in my relationships with the sons God had given me in the ministry.

Another amazing wisdom key I received was to be careful about the books that I wrote. In Rick Joyner's book, a pastor had been judged in heaven for the books he wrote. His books were utterly rejected in the courts of heaven as being utterly secular and unspiritual. Again, this gave me wisdom to write my books in a way that they would stand the judgment of eternity.

Another wisdom key that changed my life was when I read how Rick Joyner had confronted Apostle Paul. The things Paul told him about the ministry and the message were so revealing. Apostle Paul told him that the current church had thrown out the message of sacrifice and therefore had become a phantom of what it was called to be.

4. "*The Torch and the Sword*[4]" by Rick Joyner

"The torch and the Sword[4]" is an amazing book. In this book, I received the wisdom of valuing the presence of God, staying close to God and being in His presence. In this book, we see Rick Joyner carrying a torch easily when he was close to the Lord. However, as soon as there was a little bit of distance between him and the Lord, the torch became too heavy to carry.

The Lord taught him how many pastors had moved away from the Lord and were unable to carry their torch and replaced it with something else.

Today, it is easy to see how many men of God do not have the presence of God with them. You can hear it in the messages that they preach. They are secular, earthly-minded and filled with human wisdom instead of being filled with the treasures of the pure word of God. What wisdom it is to keep yourself in the presence of God!

5. "*God's Generals*[5]" by Roberts Liardon

Another amazing book is "God's Generals[5]" by Roberts Liardon. This is actually a series of biographies of great men that God used in the past. What amazing parallels there are between what happened to those great men of God and what is happening today! I received great wisdom to persist through trials, temptations and difficulties. I received wisdom from the stories of A. A. Allen, Alexander Dowie, Kathryn Kuhlman, Aimee Semple McPherson, William Seymour and Jack Coe. Each name I mention reminds me of a series of lessons of great wisdom. When you read biographies, you increase learning greatly.

6. "*When God Walked the Earth*[6]" by Rick Joyner

"When God Walked the Earth[6]" by Rick Joyner is another revealing book about the life of Jesus. I received great wisdom when I read about the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. I realised how wicked satan is, and how real it is that angels are everywhere in this great battle. I was touched when I learnt how superior angels were called in to guard the new disciples because

the Lord had chosen them.

7. "*He Gave Gifts Unto Men*" by Kenneth Hagin

In this book, "He Gave Gifts Unto Men" there is a testimony of how Kenneth Hagin prophesied the death of William Marion Branham. It frightened me and alerted me to stay on the course of my calling.

Branham was a great prophet who lived from 1909 to 1965. Towards the end of his ministry, he waded into various controversial teachings that were rejected by the charismatic movement. According to Kenneth Hagin, God revealed that Branham was teaching false doctrine and God was removing him because of his disobedience. At a prayer session in January 1964, Kenneth Hagin prophesied:

> *"At the end of '65, he who now stands in the forefront of the healing ministry as a prophet will be taken out of the way. He'll make a false step and satan shall destroy his life, but his spirit shall be saved, and his works will follow him. 'Ere '66 shall come, he shall be gone."*

Kenneth Hagin then approached Gordon Lindsey (who worked for Branham) in his office with the prophecy, two years before Branham's death. Two years later, on December 18, 1965, Branham and his family were returning from Indiana from their Christmas holiday. Just after dark, a car driven by a drunken driver, driving in the opposite direction collided head-on with Branham's car. He was rushed to the hospital where he remained comatose for several days and died of his injuries on Christmas Eve, 24th December 1965.

His death occurred exactly as the prophecy had declared and he died just before 1966. The need to obey God and the need to stay within the calling are great wisdom lessons from this testimony.

CHAPTER 22

Wisdom Increases through Testimonies

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: THE TESTIMONY of the Lord is sure, MAKING WISE THE SIMPLE.

Psalm 19:7

A testimony is an account of what the Lord did in someone else's life. If the Lord did it for them, He can do it for you. It is important to hear testimonies of how the Lord has moved in the lives of others. It is a revelation of how the Lord is going to move in your life. The testimonies of John Wesley's life greatly changed my life.

One day, whilst waiting on the Lord, I began to read through the story of John Wesley.

I could not believe the parallels between my life and his life. I thought I was the only one going through certain struggles.

I realised how hard and determined you need to be if you are going to build the church of God.

I realised how many journeys John Wesley had to make in order to build the church of God in the whole of England.

I received wisdom to travel and build with all my heart. I want to share with you at least forty different testimonies from the life of John Wesley that encouraged me to keep pressing on. I gleaned these testimonies from different biographies of John Wesley.

Forty Testimonies that Changed My Life

1. John Wesley had confidence in his pastors.

[1]No leader of a great religious movement was ever more happy in his helpers than Wesley. It would be hard indeed to find a finer band of men than the early Methodist preachers.[1]

2. The Methodist pastors travelled around in circuits.

[2]They generally travelled their circuits mounted on horseback, with saddle-bags, containing their scanty wardrobe and a stock of Methodist books for sale in the Societies.[2]

3. Methodist pastors travelled around with Methodist literature.

[3]They generally travelled their circuits mounted on horseback, with saddle-bags, containing their scanty wardrobe and a stock of Methodist books for sale in the Societies.[3]

4. John Wesley was concerned about his pastors' transport.

[4]The horse was scarcely less important than his master in days when the preacher's "round" or circuit, sometimes embraced a county or two. For a quarter of the century Thomas Olivers rode one horse that a friend purchased for five pounds and gave to him when he went to his first circuit. He travelled comfortably upon it not less than a hundred thousand miles. This, however, was a model horse, "such another as, in many respects, none of my brethren could ever boast of." John Prichard was less fortunate. His horse became sick, and the poor itinerant had to travel on foot during one winter and spring about twelve hundred miles. The early minutes, which may be said to contain the "whole duty of a Methodist preacher," do not forget one cardinal point. It is asked in 1765,"Are all the preachers merciful to their beasts?" "Perhaps not. Every one ought – 1. Never to ride hard 2. To see with his own eyes his horse rubbed, fed and bedded."[4]

5. John Wesley's pastors were Lay Pastors.

[5]Some of the first preachers supported themselves by the labour of their own hands; others married wives with property, or, like Taylor, had a little stock of their own.[5]

6. John Wesley required his pastors to prove their calling by doing the work.

[6]Thomas Walsh, an Irish Papist, became one of the grandest of Wesley's lay-preachers. He had been trained in the strictest obedience to Rome, but was led to join the Church of England through the instrumentality of an elder brother, who was trained as a priest, but forsook Popery through reading the Bible. Walsh heard the Methodist preachers, and joined the Society in September, 1749, when he was about nineteen years ole. He was soon rejoicing in the love of God. When he opened his mind to Wesley about his call to preach, he was requested to send an account of his conversion and experience. He received the following answer:- "My dear Brother – it is hard to judge what God has called you to till trial is made. Therefore, when you have an opportunity, you may go to Shronil, and spend two or three days with the people there. Speak to them in Irish."[6]

7. John Wesley sent people to where they would flow and fit in.

[7]Thomas Walsh, an Irish Papist, became one of the grandest of Wesley's lay-preachers. He had been trained in the strictest obedience to Rome, but was led to join the Church of England through the instrumentality of an elder brother, who was trained as a priest, but forsook Popery through reading the Bible. Walsh heard the Methodist preachers, and joined the Society in September, 1749, when he was about nineteen years ole. He was soon rejoicing in the love of God. When he opened his mind to Wesley about his call to preach, he was requested to send an account of his conversion and experience. He received the following answer:- "My dear Brother – it is hard to judge what God has called you to till trial is made. Therefore, when you have an opportunity, you may go to Shronil, and spend two or three days with the people there. Speak to them in Irish."[7]

8. John Wesley did not forget the contribution of others to his current success.

[8]Wesley makes another reference to this devoted man in connection with his visit to Colne in 1776. He preached to a multitude of people, and scarcely ever saw a congregation where men, women, and children stood in such rapt attention drinking in

the word, "wherein, thirty years ago, no Methodist could show his head! The first that preached here was John Jane who was innocently riding through the town, when the zealous mob pulled him off his horse, and put him in the stocks. He seized the opportunity, and vehemently exhorted them to 'flee from the wrath to come.'" Jane had been dead for more than a quarter of a century, but Wesley had not forgotten his labours, nor had those labours been without the abundant blessing of God.[8]

9. John Wesley encouraged self-improvement and self-education.

[9]Wesley was often compelled to employ men of little or no education. But he did his best to rouse the desire for self-improvement. During the Lent of 1749 he met at Kingswood as many of the preachers as could be spared from their circuits, and read lectures to them, as he used to do to his pupils at the University. Seventeen assembled, whom he divided into two classes. To one of these companies he read "*Pearson on the Creed*," to the other Aldrich's "Logic." He also read "*Rules for Action and Utterance*" with both. Many references to similar gatherings are found in the journals. Wesley sometimes chose a book of philosophy, and pointed out its merits or mistakes.[9]

10. John Wesley expected his pastors to be all-rounders. – involved in all aspects of ministry.

[10]Wesley expected his preachers to be the mainspring of his Societies. At Londonderry, in June, 1771, he met the singers, whom he had joined together two years before. The preachers had paid no attention to that part of their work, so that all Wesley's previous care was fruitless. " And no wonder," he adds; "for nothing will stand in the Methodist plan unless the preacher has his heart and his hand in it. Every preacher, therefore, should consider it is not his business to mind this or that thing only, but everything."[10]

11. John Wesley went places with large numbers of his associates.

[11]Wesley was proud of his preachers. The first Sir Robert Peel greatly esteemed the Methodists. He often attended their chapels, and most of his Lancashire works were under the management of members of the Society, who rendered him excellent service. He once asked Wesley to breakfast with him during a Lancashire Conference. Wesley promised to do so on condition that he might bring some of his children with him. At the appointed hour he appeared, accompanied by thirty-six of his itinerant preachers.[11]

12. John Wesley was concerned about the health of his pastors.

[12s]The health of his preachers often gave Wesley grave concern. He did not fail to point the sad moral of such losses as that of Thomas Walsh, who, "by violent straining of his voice, added to frequent colds," brought on the consumption, which snatched him away in the strength of his years. John Cowmeadow was 'another martyr to loud and long preaching." Wesley tried to save his life by his favourite specific: " I took him to travel with me." But it was too late. The poor preacher revived a little, but soon relapsed. Wesley steadily set his face against "that vile custom" of one man's preaching three times a day to the same congregation week after week, which he felt was enough to wear out the body and mind both of the speaker and his hearers. His

journals and the Minutes of Conference bear constant witness to Wesley's loving watchfulness over the men who laboured with him in the Gospel. St. Paul's care for Timothy is a true picture of Wesley and his "helpers."

He did not remember any preacher who in so few years had been used for the conversion of so many souls. Walsh died of consumption in 1759, in the twenty-eighth year of his age. His incessant study, his abstemiousness, and his prodigious labours, all contributed to this painful loss, but Wesley always considered Walsh a martyr to loud and long speaking. He carefully entreated his preachers to beware lest excitement should lead them to commit the same error.[12]

13. John Wesley was a man who walked a lot.

[13]Wesley was no mean pedestrian. The year before he sailed to Georgia he walked a thousand and fifty miles to preach in the churches round Oxford. A large part of his travelling on the Continent in 1738 was done on foot. Wesley never lost his zest for walking. In Ireland in 1758, when a horse brought for him without saddle or bridle, he set out on foot. A saddle was then found, and some one galloped after him at full speed with the horse. Ten years later he walked on seven or eight miles before his servant overtook him with his carriage. At Bristol, in September 1788, he says that his friends, more kind than wise, would scarce suffer him to walk. "It seemed so sad a thing to walk five or six miles! I am ashamed that a Methodist preacher, in tolerable health, should make any difficulty of this." The old man of eighty-five had not lost his enjoyment of a good walk.[13]

14. John Wesley exercised his authority over his pastors to make them obey the call which they claimed they had.

[14]Wesley's rule over his preachers and people has been branded as arbitrary. Henry Moore, who was well able to judge, says that his "arbitrary power, so called, was exercised from first to last in keeping his associates to that work of God, that wholly religious design and employment, which they all professed to embrace as their duty and calling when they joined him. And from this he certainly would not consent that any of them should swerve.[14]

15. John Wesley was a friend to his pastors.

[15]In everything else he was, even by their own account, a father and a friend.[15]

16. John Wesley was a father to his pastors.

[16]In everything else he was, even by their own account, a father and a friend.[16]

17. John Wesley wanted to know what people were thinking.

[17]Henry Moore enjoys the reputation of having contradicted Wesley more than any man in England. But Wesley encouraged him to speak his mind, and only liked him the better for his plainness. Wesley administered a neat rebuke to one of his preachers, who was irritated because a young itinerant found fault with one of his seniors. "I will thank the youngest man among you to tell me of any fault you see in me; in doing so, I shall consider him my best friend." Wesley felt the care of his Societies a burden put upon him by providence, which he durst not lay down. He had

not sought authority, but he was determined to use what had come on him unawares as wisely as he could for the glory of God and the best interests of the Methodist people.[17]

18. John Wesley's mistake was to show too much kindness and forgiveness to his pastors.

[18]If he erred at all in the use of his power, it was in his forbearance. "I have been too tender of these men." He once said to Moore in reference to two recalcitrant preachers; "you should have opposed my receiving them again. You know I halt on that foot."[18]

19. I learned that the gathering of Wesley's pastors "The Conference" was a great event of fellowship, love and direction for all ministers. It was concerned with the foundations, doctrine and discipline of the church. The latter conferences were concerned with the oversight and management of the growing church.

[19]The annual conference was the great event of a preacher's year. The first of these conferences held at the Foundery, opened on Monday, June 25th 1744 and lasted for the rest of the week.

The early Conferences laid the foundations of Methodism on a firm basis. Its preachers were knit together by their doctrine and their discipline. Difficulties of every kind vanished when all thus met face to face. At the Conference of 1751, Wesley says, "the more we conversed, the more brotherly love increased." He expected to hear many objections to the first Methodist doctrines, but none were raised. "We seemed to be all of one mind, as well as one heart." Before the session closed, Wesley mentioned whatever he thought amiss or wanting in any. His words were received with love and with serious attention, so that not one seemed to go away discontented. In 1753 and 1754 the same spirit of unity and love finds emphatic recognition in the journals. The early Minutes show that the first conferences were largely employed in considering the fundamental doctrines of Methodism and the practical work of her preachers. During the last 20 years of Wesley's life, the oversight of the growing organisation occupied more and more of the attention of the Conference.[19]

20. John Wesley told his pastors to read the Bible and also read the books he had written.

21. John Wesley had 12 rules for his pastors.

Wesley's 12 rules of a helper are still cherished as the guiding principles of a Methodist preacher: -

[20]1) Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time, nor spend more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2) Be serious. Let your motto be, "Holiness to the Lord." Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking.

3) Converse sparingly and cautiously with women, particularly with young women.

4) Take no step towards marriage without solemn prayer to God and consulting with your brethren.

5) Believe evil of no one unless fully proved; take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction you can on everything. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

6) Speak evil of no one, else your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker; keep your thoughts within your own breasts till you come to the person concerned.

7) Tell everyone what you think wrong in him, lovingly and plainly and as soon as may be, else it will fester in your own heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

8) Do not affect the gentleman. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

9) Be ashamed of nothing but sin: no, not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary.

10) Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time and do not mend our rules but keep them, and that for conscience' sake.

11) You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore, spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you but to those who want you most.

12) Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel and in union with your brethren. As such, it is your part to employ your time as our rules direct; partly in preaching and visiting from house to house, partly in reading, meditation and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work which the Conference shall advice at those times and places which they shall judge most for His glory.

"Observe, it is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care merely of this or that society, but to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and, with all your power, to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord. And, remember, a Methodist preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline. Therefore, you will need all the grace and sense you have, and to have all your wits about you."[20]

22. John Wesley prayed for helpers.

[21]About the time his brother's labours were narrowed down to the two chief centres, Wesley found one of the most valuable of all his co-workers in this second age of Methodism. On March 13th 1757, finding himself weak at Snowsfields, he prayed that God would send him help. Wesley's prayer for assistance was answered. As soon as he had finished his sermon at West Street, whither he hastened after preaching at Snowsfields, John Fletcher, who had that morning been ordained priest, appeared to help him. "How wonderful are the ways of God!" says Wesley. "When my bodily strength failed, and no clergyman in England was able and willing to assist me, He sent me help from the mountains of Switzerland, and a helpmeet for me in every respect! Where could I have found such another?"

In March, 1757, John Fletcher had sought holy orders, at Wesley's suggestion. After his ordination he became Vicar of Madeley, but to the end of his life he was the most valuable of all Wesley's helpers in the Church of England. He relieved him of the

burden of the Calvinistic controversy in 1771 by his "Checks to Arminianism," travelled with him to encourage the Societies, and kindled anew the fire of devotion as often as he appeared among the preachers at their annual Conference. Wesley hoped that Fletcher would have in some measure filled his place after his death. But all such hopes were frustrated by the death of the Vicar of Madeley in 1785.

Wesley wrote his friend's life. "Within fourscore years," he says, "I have known many excellent, holy in heart and life, but one equal to him I have not known, one so uniformly and deeply devoted to God. So unblameable a man in every respect I have not found either in Europe or America, nor do I expect to find another such on this side eternity."[21]

23. John Wesley had several disloyal people who fought him.

[22]Fletcher's help was the more precious to Wesley because he had many troubles at this time. Thomas Walsh died in Ireland in 1759, in the twenty-eighth year of his age. "Oh what a man," says Wesley, "to be snatched away in the strength of his years!" Fletcher was another Thomas Walsh for Wesley. A heavier blow than Walsh's death was the defection of Thomas Maxfield in 1763.

In London the movement was unhappily attended with a wild fanaticism which soon blighted all its gracious fruits, and gave the Society there a blow from which it did not recover for years. On the last day of 1762 Wesley says, "I now stood and looked back on the past year, a year of uncommon trials and uncommon blessings. Abundance have been convinced of sin; very many have found peace with God; and in London only, I believe full two hundred have been brought into glorious liberty. And yet I have had more care and trouble in six months, than in several years preceding. What the end will be, I know not; but it is enough that God knoweth."

George Bell began to hold meetings of own, declared that God had done with preaching and Sacraments, and that none could teach those who were renewed in love unless they enjoyed that blessing themselves. On November 24th, 1762, Wesley stood where he could hear Bell without being seen. He prayed for nearly an hour with great fervour. Wesley afterwards told him what he did not like, and treated him and his associates with characteristic moderation. Maxfield allied himself with Bell, and caused a serious division in the Society. Some of the members went so far as to tell Wesley that they would have no more to do with him, but would follow Mr. Maxfield. Maxfield resigned his connection with Wesley at the end of April. He took with him two hundred of Wesley's members, and preached to a large congregation of his own in Little Moorfields. Wesley visited him in his last illness, and preached in his chapel, but, as we have seen, he was never able to acquit him of dishonourable conduct. The London Society lost four hundred members by this deplorable outburst of fanatism. Nothing, however, could long check the progress of Methodism.

The controversy with Dr. Lavington, Bishop of Exeter, was one of the most painful Wesley ever had. Southey considers that he did not treat the Bishop with the urbanity, which he showed to all other opponents. The fact is that Lavington, who wrote anonymously, indulged a spirit sadly unbecoming such a subject and such a writer. Miss Wedgwood says, he "deserves to be coupled with the men who flung dead cats and rotten eggs at the Methodists, not with those who assailed their tenets with arguments, or even serious rebuke." Wesley clearly pointed this out: "Any scribbler

with a middling share of low wit, not encumbered with good-nature or modesty, may raise a laugh on those whom he cannot confute, and run them down whom he dares not look in the face. By this means, even a comparer of Methodists and Papists may blaspheme the great work of God, not only without blame, but with applause, at least from readers of his own stamp. But it is high time, sir, you should leave your skulking place. Come out, and let us look each other in the face." The controversy continued for two years. It is pleasant to add that in August 1762, a fortnight before the Bishop's death, Wesley was at Exeter Cathedral. "I was well pleased," he says, "to partake of the Lord's Supper with my old opponent, Bishop Lavington. Oh, may we sit down together in the kingdom of our Father!"[22]

24. I found out that building John Wesley's headquarters was a great event in their ministry.

[23]The great event of home Methodism during this period was the erection of City Road Chapel. Since 1739, the Foundery had been the headquarters of Methodism. In 1743 Wesley had secured a West End centre, which is still standing, in West Street, near the Seven Dials. Southwark and Spitalfields had also good chapels. On April 21st, 1777, Wesley laid the foundation of his Methodist cathedral. "The rain," he says, "befriended us much, by keeping away thousands who purposed to be there; but there were still such multitudes, that it was with great difficulty I got through them to lay the first stone." In a sermon on the words, "According to this time, it shall be said, What hath God wrought!" he described the rise of Methodism at Oxford, its mission in Georgia, the exclusion of himself and his friends from the English churches; he also explained the nature of Methodism and its relation to the Church of England. All who heard the venerable preacher must have seen by what a strange path God had led him up to that memorable day.[23]

25. John Wesley operated a centralised financial system.

[24]An appeal for help in this great undertaking was sent to all the country Societies. Wesley wrote urging them to assist the parent Society, which had for many years contributed largely and willingly to their necessities.[24]

26. John Wesley took upon himself the burden to personally raise funds.

The burden of raising funds fell on Wesley himself.

27. I learned that Wesley took offerings by holding out a hat.

[25]He made collections for the work in all parts of the country. We catch one glimpse of him and his faithful companion, Thomas Taylor, standing on either side of the path at Keighley after Wesley had preached. Hat in hand, they thus gathered seven pounds for the new chapel.[25]

28. John Wesley was interested in the details of the building and construction.

[26]Wesley spent much time in London attending to all details of the building. Sunday, November 1st, 1778, was the opening day. Many advantages were reaped by the erection of this commodious chapel. The covenant service was held there on the 1st of January, 1779. "At length," says Wesley, "we have a house capable of containing the whole Society." The dwelling-house which is still standing on the south side of the

chapel [No. 47, City Road] was the home of Wesley and his preachers, to which they were glad to remove the ruinous premises at the Foundery.[26]

29. John Wesley was humble in his self-estimation.

[27]I have been wandering up and down between fifty and sixty years, endeavouring, in my poor way, to do a little good to my fellow-creatures; and now it is probable that there are but a few steps between me and death; and what have I to trust to for salvation? I can see nothing that I have done or suffered that will bear looking at. I have no other plea than this:

"I the chief of sinners am, But Jesus died for me."[27]

30. John Wesley ensured that the Methodist church would outlive him.

[28]Wesley took all possible care that Methodism should not perish with his death. The principles which eventually led to separation were meanwhile extending and taking deeper root. The connection with the Church was becoming slighter.[28]

31. John Wesley was a simple man.

[29]As a preacher, Wesley was remarkable for simplicity of style and force of argument. Whitefield was an impassioned orator; Charles Wesley carried everything before him by his deep emotion and his forcible application; John Wesley appealed to the reason with irresistible power. "His attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive; his voice not loud, but clear and manly; his style neat, simple, perspicuous, and admirably adapted to the capacity of his hearers." Henry Moore, his biographer and intimate friend, says that when he first heard Wesley preach he thought it strange that a man who spoke with such simplicity should have made so much noise in the world. He paid a great tribute to the sermon, however, for he said that he remembered more of it than of any he had ever heard.

Wesley early learned this art of simplicity. As a young man, he once preached a highly finished sermon to a country congregation. The people listened with open mouths. He saw at once that they did not understand what he said. He struck out some of the hard expressions, and tried again. Their mouths were now only half open. Wesley, however, was resolved to carry them entirely with him. He read the sermon to an intelligent servant, and got her to tell him whenever she did not understand. Betty's "Stop, sir," came so often that he grew impatient. But he persevered, wrote a plain word over every hard one, and had his reward in seeing that his congregation now clearly understood every word.[29]

32. I found out that Wesley believed in illustrating his message.

[30]The applications of Wesley's sermons were never slurred. The discourses in the Scotch kirks struck him as specially defective in this respect. On one occasion he speaks of the excellent truths he there listened to, but adds, "As there was no application, it is likely to do as much good as the singing of a lark."[30]

33. John Wesley was capable of preaching in different ways at different times.

[31]A friend once complained because he preached to a respectable congregation from

the words, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” That text would have done for Billingsgate, but not for such hearers, was the criticism. Wesley replied that if he had been in Billingsgate, he should have preached from “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” It was his rule to preach the Law to the careless. To speak of justification by faith before people desired to find it was, he felt, only likely to do harm; when people were “ripe for the Gospel,” then Wesley preached it with power. He availed himself of all circumstances that might render his message impressive.[31]

34. John Wesley did much preaching and much travelling.

[32]During his half-century of itinerant life he travelled a quarter of a million miles, and delivered more than forty thousand sermons. Such a restless and far-reaching itinerancy exerted an enormous influence on behalf of evangelical religion throughout the United Kingdom.[32]

35. I found out that John Wesley made books available to everyone, including the poor.

[33]Wesley’s service to popular literature entitles him to a distinguished place among the benefactors of the eighteenth century. Most of his writings and his brother’s hymns were published at prices that put them within the reach of all. Many were in the form of penny tracts, so that even the poorest could purchase them. Whilst this edition was passing through the press, Wesley writes, “I have laboured as much as many a writer; and all my labour has gained me, in seventy years, a debt of five or six hundred pounds.” In later years, however, he found, to his surprise, that his cheap publications had made him rich.

Wesley’s tracts are models of brevity and of searching appeal. “*A Word to a Sabbath-breaker*”, “*A Word to a Drunkard*”. “*A Word to a Smuggle*”, “*A Word to a Methodist*”, are the titles of some of these vigorous writings. They were composed in moments of quiet, snatched during the incessant labours of his itinerancy, and were spread broadcast through the country. Wesley was one of the pioneers of tract-writing and distribution. “Two-and-forty years ago,” he writes, “having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books than any I had seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny apiece, and afterwards several larger. Some of these had such a sale as I never thought of; and by this; means I unawares became rich.”[33]

36. I learned that John Wesley created an appetite for reading among his preachers.

[34]He created an appetite for reading among his people, and as the Societies grew, the demand for his books became enormous.

To candid reasonable men, I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God, just hovering over the great gulf; till a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing, the way to heaven, how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end He came down from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. Oh, give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri.* Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit

down alone; only God is here. In His presence I open, I read His book, for this end: to find the way to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does anything appear dark or intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of lights. 'Lord, is it not Thy word, if any man lack wisdom let him ask it of God? Thou givest liberally, and upbraidest not. Thou has said, if any man be willing to do Thy will, he shall know. I am willing to do; let me know Thy will.' I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, comparing all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God, and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach."[34]

37. John Wesley did not like fighting rebellious and disloyal people but did it when he had to.

[35]Controversial writing was always distasteful to Wesley. When he began to write his second letter to Bishop Lavington, who had compared the Methodists to the Papists, he describes his task with a sigh. "Heavy work, such as I should never choose; but sometimes it must be done. Well might the ancient say, 'God made practical divinity necessary, the devil controversial. But it is necessary: we must "resist the devil," or he will not "flee from us." "Oh that I might dispute with no man!" He says on another occasion, "But if I must dispute, let it be with men of sense."[35]

38. I learned that John Wesley had a good conscience.

[36]His patience was sometimes sorely tried. A clamouring crowd of beggars once surrounded his carriage at Norwich. He turned round and asked somewhat sharply whether they thought he could support the poor everywhere. Entering his carriage, he slipped, and fell. "It is all right, Joseph,' he said, "it is all right; it is only what I deserved, for if I had no other good to give, I ought at least to have given them good words."[36]

39. I found out that John Wesley begged for the poor.

[37]At Bristol, in September 1783, Wesley collected ninety pounds for his poor members. But the most touching and interesting glimpse of the aged philanthropist is in January 1785, when he was in his eighty-second year. At the New Year coals and bread were distributed among the poor of the Society. Wesley saw that they needed clothes also, and set out to beg the money. The streets were filled with melting snow, which lay ankle-deep on the ground, so that his feet were steeped in snow-water nearly from morning to evening. Four days of such travelling all over London brought on a violent flux; but his friend Dr. Whitehead came to his relief. Two years later Wesley made another begging tour of the metropolis, which yielded two hundred pounds. Six or seven of his people gave ten pounds each, but Wesley was disappointed that he did not find forty or fifty to help in the same way. He was anxious to provide two hundred cases of distress.[37]

40. I discovered that John Wesley practised medicine whenever he had to.

[38]Wesley's medical knowledge helped him to relieve much suffering. In 1746, the same year that the lending stock was started, he began to give medicines to the poor. Thirty came the first day. In six months six hundred cases had been treated; two

hundred were sensibly better, fifty-one thoroughly cured. This was done at an expense of thirty pounds. This success led Wesley to form a dispensary at Bristol, which soon had two hundred patients. Wesley's shrewd observations on medical works show how carefully he sought the best light of his time.

Wherever Wesley went he made use of his medical skill. His favourite remedy for consumptive tendencies was a country journey, and several friends were invited to share his itinerancy with a view to the restoration of their health. His "Primitive Physic," of which a twenty-third edition was published in the year of his death, grew out of his medical attention to the poor. For nearly thirty years before its publication he had made anatomy and physic the diversion of his leisure hours. He had studied them with special attention before he went to Georgia. His dispensary in 1747 was started with the assistance of an apothecary and an experienced surgeon. Wesley himself now studied medicine more carefully. He published his "Primitive Physic" in 1747 or 1748. Its quaint remedies often provoke a smile. Pounded garlic applied to the soles of the feet was a "never-failing" remedy for hoarseness and loss of voice. Boiled nettles and warm treacle were sovereign cures for colds and swellings. An eminent medical man, however, some years ago pronounced the book incomparably superior to any non-professional work of the same date.[38]

CHAPTER 23

Wisdom Increases through Instructions

GIVE INSTRUCTION to a wise man, and HE WILL BE YET WISER: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Proverbs 9:9

An instruction is a practical order, command or directive that you can actually follow.

When you are training to be a pilot, an instructor will teach you what to do.

The instructor gives instructions. Pilots are expected to follow instructions. Pilots are not expected to come out with new ideas on what to do. Pilots may have up to three hundred passengers whose lives depend on the pilots' following instructions.

Would you like to have a pilot who does not follow instructions?

Thank God for how you have received wisdom, knowledge, understanding and counsel. Thank God for all the good advice you have ever received. This chapter is about something quite different. This chapter is about receiving INSTRUCTIONS.

You must learn that ***instructions*** are different from ***advice***.

Instructions have to do with orders, commands and directives.

There are times that God gives us orders, commands and directives. It is when you are childlike and humble that you can receive instructions.

It is a great blessing to receive instructions. Many people would do well if they were ever to have instructions. Pray that you will be a person who is qualified to receive orders, commands and directives.

You must value relationships where you receive instructions, orders, commands and directives.

You must be obedient to instructions more than to any other type of wisdom. Obeying instructions will save your life!

You will discover that many of the passages in the Bible are giving counsel, advice and doctrine but very few instructions.

Wherever there are instructions you must be zealous to obey them. Instructions are orders! In the army, instructions are called orders.

Instructions to Ministers

1. **Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel!** The Great Commission is an example of an instruction. It is an order from God. We are instructed to go into the whole world and preach the gospel. Those orders have not changed! Until Jesus comes, there are no new orders. It is in our interest to obey this great instruction.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Matthew 28:19-20

2. **Owe no man anything!** This instructions means you should not go into debt. This instruction means that you should practically not get into debts by taking mortgages, taking loans, overdrafts, buying on credit and using credit cards.

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Romans 13:8

3. **Seek the kingdom of God first!** This instruction helps you to know what to prioritize. The kingdom of God comes first.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:33

4. **Forgive!** God's instruction to us is to forgive people who have hurt us. Christians are a race of forgiving, loving people who do not take into account a wrong suffered. Jesus taught us to forgive seventy times seven times.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Mark 11:25

5. **Feed my sheep!** This was a practical instruction to Peter to focus on preaching, teaching and ministering to the sheep.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, FEED MY LAMBS.

He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, FEED MY SHEEP.

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, FEED MY SHEEP.

John 21:15-17

6. **Walk in love!** This is a practical instruction to be kind, patient and to not take into account a wrong suffered.

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Ephesians 5:2

7. **Ask and it shall be given to you!** This is a practical instruction to pray. Just get up and start praying and many doors will open to you.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Matthew 7:7

CHAPTER 24

Wisdom Increases through Rebukes

And that from a child thou hast known THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for REPROOF, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2 Timothy 3:15-16

The verse above teaches us that the Holy Scriptures make you wise. In the same breath, it teaches us that the Holy Scripture is used for rebukes and correction. This is proof that rebukes from the Lord are necessary to make us wise.

A rebuke is a sharp expression of disapproval and rejection. Rebukes are necessary for correction. People who are never rebuked, turn out badly.

There is a time where gentle counsel, advice, encouragement, warnings, suggestions, propositions, promptings and submission of ideas are helpful. However, there is a time when gentle counsel, advice, encouragement, warnings, suggestions, propositions, promptings and submission of ideas *cannot* change a person. This is the time where rebukes must come in.

Proud people do not like to be rebuked. A rebuke is sure to send a proud person spinning. Make sure you do not rebuke a proud person. He will only hate you.

Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

Proverbs 9:8

God is going to increase your wisdom through rebukes. Throughout your journey with the Lord, expect to be rebuked at one time or the other. Know that wisdom is going to come to you.

One day, I was on holiday with my grandfather in Switzerland, having a jolly time with my grand parents. One evening, my grandfather pointed his walking stick at me and spoke angrily in German. He rebuked me sharply for leaving on the lights in the corridor. I was used to leaving the lights on everywhere. That was a turning point for me. From that time, I received wisdom about how to use electricity and how to save a lot of money by turning off lights. This rebuke happened to me long before electricity became as expensive as it is today. Today, I see people trying hard to learn what I learnt from my grandfather's rebuke many years ago.

One day I spoke to the famous evangelist, T.L. Osborn. I asked him, "How can I know where to have crusades?" I asked him, "Which town and which city should I go to?" He responded sharply, "Don't be spooky! Don't be mystical. Just go wherever there are people who need the Lord. Just choose a city and go there!"

That was a rebuke to set me on my way without excuse.

On another occasion, I was invited to have lunch with the great Archbishop Benson Idahosa

and another bishop. This amazing lunch took place in an expensive hotel in the centre of London. In the middle of the meal, I stopped eating because I was more interested in talking to these great men of God than in eating.

Suddenly, the Archbishop Idahosa turned to me and asked whether I had finished eating. I responded that I had finished.

He looked at me quizzically and said, “This is expensive food. Eat everything on your plate.”

I was stunned by this command; but I hurriedly ate up everything on my plate.

I never forgot that rebuke.

It made me appreciate the expensive lunch I had been invited to. I realised that I had taken everything for granted.

Archbishop Idahosa told me that seventy per cent of all pastors in Africa were either his “products” or “products of his products”. I realised even more that I was with a great person and I needed to cherish every moment and every opportunity I was enjoying. I will never forget that lunch. I will never forget the interaction, the counsel and the rebukes I received.

You will find out that sharp rebukes and sharp criticisms of your life will release great bolts of wisdom into your soul. Do not be angry at sharp rebukes. They are great stepping-stones into your wisdom bank.

CHAPTER 25

Wisdom Increases through Teaching

GIVE INSTRUCTION TO A WISE MAN, AND HE WILL BE YET WISER: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Proverbs 9:9

Every time you listen to teaching from the word of God, your wisdom increases. The teaching of the word of God is one of the greatest sources of wisdom. Every teacher I have exposed myself to has caused me to increase in wisdom! It is a great mistake to not expose yourself to teaching of the Word. Giving instructions to a wise person will make him even wiser.

How do you expose yourself to teaching? How do you expose yourself to instruction? You expose yourself to teaching by listening to preaching and teaching videos.

You expose yourself to teaching by listening to preaching and teaching audio messages.

You expose yourself to teaching by reading certain kinds of books.

You expose yourself to teaching by attending church services where the word of God is taught properly. Every time you hear the teaching of the word of God you are increasing in wisdom.

You expose yourself to teaching by attending conferences where the word of God is taught. There is a great teacher called Kenneth Hagin. Exposing myself to his teaching over the years made me wiser in ministry. It is wise to hear the call of God and to follow it diligently.

The prophetic teaching of Kenneth Hagin has made me conscious of how real Jesus is. My wisdom levels were raised greatly through my addiction to the teachings of Kenneth Hagin. I can still hear the voice of Kenneth Hagin saying, "A minister must bend over backwards to be honest."

In other words, you must do whatever it takes to be an honest, truthful and trustworthy person. I remember that phrase because he was talking about how he had been invited to preach and his host had cheated him out of his offering. His host had made certain promises and completely cheated him when he realised that people appreciated Kenneth Hagin's ministry and gave very generously.

Exposing myself to the teaching of Rick Joyner has given me the wisdom to prepare for eternity and eternal judgment. His teachings have livened up my spirit and made me wiser in my preparation for eternity. Although I was well hooked onto the wisdom that I received through Kenneth Hagin, reading from Rick Joyner made me even wiser.

Every time you expose yourself to teaching, you become wiser. I remember many words I read from Rick Joyner's book, "***The Final Quest***.[1]" I remember how Rick Joyner met different ministers who had died and experienced judgment. How can I forget the things they shared about judgment in heaven?

The teachings and writings of Rick Joyner made me wiser concerning eternal judgment. In the visions and teachings, he described his encounter with various dead ministers. Speaking to dead

people and listening to their experiences at the judgment throne can only make you wiser.

A dead Christian he met in the outer darkness of heaven said, "We knew the Lord and we trusted the cross for His salvation, but we lived for ourselves more than we really lived for him." He continued, "I am in the lowest rank of heaven. There is no greater folly than to know the great salvation of God but to then go on living for yourself. To come here and learn the reality of that is a grief beyond what an earthly soul can experience. We are those in the outer darkness because of this great folly."[1]

[2]A dead pastor he met in heaven said to him, "I had been given the grace to be a spiritual father but I was a very poor one. All children are rebellious. They are all self-centred and think the world revolves around them. Almost every child will at times bring reproach on his family, but he is still part of the family. I turned away many of God's own children, precious people he had entrusted to me so they could be brought to maturity. I failed with many of those who stayed with me. Most of them suffered terrible and unnecessary wounds of failure that I could have helped them avoid."

He said, "I built a large organisation but the greatest gifts were the people who were sent to me for discipling. But I rejected them. Had I not been so self-centred and concerned with my own reputation, I would be a king here."

Another pastor he met in heaven told him about his marriage. The pastor described his marriage and said, "Everyone thought we had a good marriage but I did not love my wife at all. Neither did she love me. In fact, after just a few years of marriage, we did not even like each other. But we both needed each other so we found a way to work together. Our marriage was not a yoke of love but of bondage. The more successful we became, the more unhappy we became, and the more deception we used to fool those who followed us. We were empty wretches by the end of our lives."

Yet another pastor Rick Joyner met in heaven spoke about how he began to touch the Lord's anointed and to do the prophets harm.

The minister confessed to him, "I incited people to investigate other ministers and do my dirty work. I had them scour the earth to find any error or sin in the lives of others so they could be exposed. I became the worst thing that a man could become on the earth – a stumbling block that produced other stumbling blocks. We sowed fear and division throughout the church, all in the name of protecting the truth. In my self-righteousness, I was headed for perdition."

The man continued and told him, "In a great mercy of the Lord, the Lord allowed me to be struck by a disease that would bring about a slow and humiliating death. Just before I died, I came to my senses and repented. I am thankful to be here at all." [2]

This testimony which was a teaching by Rick Joyner, would make anyone wise enough to avoid attacking the Lord's anointed and seeking to destroy other ministers. It also shows how the evil of becoming a stumbling block in the church will be judged.

Another dead pastor that Rick Joyner met in heaven told him, "I am sorry that I did not serve you better. I was a shallow person and my writings were shallow, filled with more earthly wisdom than divine truth. When I beheld the Lord here, I wanted to grind my writings into powder, just as Moses did with the golden calf."

He said to him, "Study to show yourself approved unto God, not unto men. Do not follow men."

Reading the prophetic teachings of Rick Joyner in his books, "***The Final Quest***", "***The Call***", "***The Torch and the Sword***", have been amazing sources of wisdom for my preparation for eternity.

Another teacher who has helped me to increase in wisdom is Derek Prince. When I exposed myself to the teachings of Derek Prince, I became even wiser. Derek Prince taught on the wisdom of avoiding curses and inducing blessings. I always hear his voice ringing in my ears and saying, "If you do not honour your father, it will never be well with you and you will not live long." As a younger man, I always remembered these words and it made me much wiser in relation to my biological father and my spiritual fathers.

Indeed, teachings of the word of God will make you wiser. Who are the teachers of your life? If you want your wisdom levels to increase, expose yourself to more and more teachings.

CHAPTER 26

Wisdom Increases through Prayer

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

If you want your wisdom levels to increase, you must learn to *pray for wisdom.* Wisdom is something that comes to you when you pray for it. If you do not pray for wisdom, you will not receive the wisdom that you need.

Praying for the Spirit of wisdom is praying for wisdom. Jesus taught us to pray for the Holy Spirit therefore you must pray for the Spirit of wisdom. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13) *Solomon is the best example of someone who prayed for wisdom.*

> Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;
>
> 1 Kings 3:9-11

Seven Effects of Praying for Wisdom

> AND GOD GAVE SOLOMON WISDOM and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. AND SOLOMON'S WISDOM EXCELLED THE WISDOM OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE EAST COUNTRY, AND ALL THE WISDOM OF EGYPT. FOR HE WAS WISER THAN ALL MEN; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. AND THERE CAME OF ALL PEOPLE TO HEAR THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON, FROM ALL KINGS OF THE EARTH, WHICH HAD HEARD OF HIS WISDOM.
>
> 1 Kings 4:29-34

1. Praying for wisdom makes you have a large heart. Solomon received a large heart in response to his prayer for wisdom. A large heart speaks of having a great depth of understanding and insight.

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of

heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

1 Kings 4:29

2. Praying for wisdom makes you have a higher level of wisdom than the wisdom prevailing in your nation.

And Solomon's wisdom EXCELLED THE WISDOM OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE EAST COUNTRY, and all the wisdom of EGYPT.

1 Kings 4:30

Having wisdom which is superior to the prevailing wisdom in your country is a sign of having prayed for wisdom. There is a prevalent kind of wisdom in every nation of the world. America has its wisdom. Africa has its wisdom. Asia has its wisdom. The wisdom of God is above the wisdom of all these great nations. When you pray for wisdom, God will give you wisdom that supersedes all wisdom in the world.

3. Praying for wisdom makes you have a higher level of wisdom than your colleagues. Becoming wiser than your contemporaries is the direct effect of Solomon's prayer for wisdom.

FOR HE WAS WISER THAN ALL MEN; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.

1 Kings 4:31

Solomon received wisdom from God. Obviously, the wisdom he had made him wiser than his classmates. If God gives you wisdom, you will have a greater kind of wisdom than anyone in your life.

4. Praying for wisdom will make you a man of proverbs and of songs. The wisdom you receive will cause you to speak with proverbs and to write special songs.

And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

1 Kings 4:32

Those who write proverbs are able to couch wisdom cleverly, in a way that is difficult to forget. Those who write songs are able to couch wisdom in a way that fits into a melody. Those who sing these songs do not even realise that they are being influenced and taught the wisdom of the songs they are singing. Praying for wisdom will lead to supernatural abilities and insight.

5. Praying for wisdom will make you appreciate nature. The wisdom you receive will make you appreciate the vegetation, the animals, the flying creatures and the creatures in the sea.

And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

1 Kings 4:33

Solomon began to appreciate nature in response to the prayers he had prayed. God's wisdom descended on him and he began to love nature. The wonders of creation will start to intrigue you as you grow in the wisdom that God is giving you. People who are not enchanted by wildlife often do not appreciate God's amazing wisdom in creating the world.

A bird can fly out of its nest in North America and fly continuously, crossing the equator, and go into South America. After the winter, this same bird will fly thousands of miles back to North America to the very same state, the very same city, the very same tree and the very same nest that it left a year before. These wonders will intrigue any deep thinker.

Appreciating nature is truly a sign of wisdom. A shark will swim under the water in the black and dark sea and navigate itself from the cold waters of North America, down to the shores of Cape Town in South Africa. This same shark will swim back to America without a compass, a GPS or any other guidance.

Anyone with a little "something" in his head will know that there is an amazing creator of all these things. It is important to grow in wisdom by praying the same prayers that Solomon prayed.

6. Praying for wisdom will cause people to travel from afar to listen to the wisdom God has given you.

> And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.
>
> 1 Kings 4:34

The fact that someone will leave his home to come to church to listen to you speak is a sign that you possess God's great wisdom in your life. People travelling from their homes, their cities and their nations just to listen to your preaching is indeed a sign that you possess great wisdom.

7. Praying for wisdom will cause the kings of the earth and great men of this earth to pay attention to your wisdom.

> And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.
>
> 1 Kings 4:34

Kings reign through wisdom. Many kings are not interested in the wisdom we have to offer. When you get their attention, you have crossed an important barrier. One day, kings will listen to the wisdom that you speak because God has made you wiser. By me [wisdom] kings reign, and princes decree justice (Proverbs 8:15).

CHAPTER 27

Thinking about Death Increases Wisdom

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Psalm 90:12

Numbering your days is another way of saying you should think about death. Life has more meaning in the face of death! When you count your money, you are forced to estimate when it will get finished.

Counting your money helps you to plan. If you are on a holiday and you have three days left, counting your money helps you to plan for the end of the holiday. Your mind is always forced to focus on the end.

"Numbering your days" is an ancient King James English expression teaching you to think of death so that you become wise. Life has more meaning in the face of death!

Why Should We Think about Death?

1. Thinking about death makes you live your life abundantly.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

You must think about death so that you enjoy life as it is today. Many people do not make the most of life's good experiences till death knocks on the door and ends it all. You must think about death because death is a part of this life. Death is not the opposite of life, per se. Death is not the end of life, per se. Death is a part of this life. Death is everywhere.

There are cemeteries, mortuaries and dead people everywhere. There are bodies of dead people somewhere near you, only that you cannot see them.

Death is the beginning of another state of existence. Eternity is a new way of existing, in which time, as we know it, will not exist. Thinking about death means you must live as though you would die tomorrow. Life has more meaning in the face of death.

2. Thinking about death makes you wise for the future.

A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

Proverbs 22:3

Thinking about death makes you wise. It makes you wisely prepare for the future. Death never

takes a wise man by surprise. A wise man is always ready to go. Death is the destination that all men are heading towards. No one has ever escaped it. Since no one escapes death, it is only wisdom to be well prepared for its arrival at any time.

Those who have the wisdom of thinking about death will write their Will. It is amazing that few people actually write their Wills. Thinking about death will make you do things so that after you are gone there is no confusion or uncertainty.

3. Thinking about death makes you count the days you have left on earth.

> The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away . . . So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.
>
> Psalm 90:10, 12

Thinking about death is an instruction that is intended to make you wise. You are supposed to count the days you have left. Instead of counting how many years you have lived, count how many more years you have left to live.

For instance, you must say, "I have twenty more years to seventy."

If you are forty-seven years old, you must say, "I have twenty-three more years to seventy."

If you are fifty-three years old you must say, "I have seventeen more years to seventy." If you are fifty-seven years old you must say, "I have thirteen more years to seventy."

Saying you have thirteen more years to seventy feeds you with more urgency than saying you are fifty-seven years old. Saying you are fifty-seven years old makes you sound mature and wise. But saying you have thirteen years left makes you desperate to rise up and finish things.

4. Thinking about death makes you value the people in your life.

> But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city.
>
> 2 Samuel 18:3

When the people thought of the death of David, they realised how valuable he actually was. David was worth more than ten thousand men.

Thinking about death can be depressive. However, thinking about death can also greatly increase your wisdom.

It is loss that often teaches us about the worth of things. It is the loss of people that makes you realise how valuable they are.

Death, therefore, can make you appreciate people greatly. Thinking about death can make you value the important people in your life. The thought of death can stir up your commitment and your zeal to love these people.

5. Thinking about death makes you value the things you have.

> And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the

gift of God.

Ecclesiastes 3:13

Thinking about death always makes you wise. It makes you live your life better. You must be thankful for your house, your cars, your husband or your wife, your children and all the physical things you possess.

However, you must remember that all these things will not fit into your coffin when it is time to go. You must therefore seek to enjoy them as much as you can. Storing everything for the future that never comes is not wisdom.

6. Thinking about death makes you have a good marriage.

Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 9:9

After death there will be no marriage. It takes wisdom to enjoy the blessings of marriage and the partner you have.

Many people are full of complaints and perpetually discontented because they do not have the wisdom that comes from thinking about death.

The thought of your dead spouse may spur you on to do everything you should be doing. When the person is dead, you will no longer have the opportunity to be a good husband or a good wife. It is usually the loss of something good that reveals its worth.

We suddenly become aware of how great a spouse we had when that spouse dies. I have seen people become frightened when they suspected that their spouse was dying. Even before the spouse died, they began to panic. Just the thought of death can make you wise.

7. Thinking about death makes you wise to prepare for eternity.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Hebrews 9:27

After death comes eternal judgment. Eternal judgment is like an examination where you are assessed, weighed and evaluated. Since your life and works are going to be evaluated, you will live your life with that in mind.

Eternal judgement will involve four main things.

a. Be wise because the QUANTITY OF FRUITS of your life and ministry will be judged.

And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know HOW MUCH every man had gained by trading.

Luke 19:15

At the eternal judgment, the fruits of your ministry will be assessed in terms of quality and quantity. Eternal judgment of your fruits will involve the quantity of what you have done for the

Lord.

b. Be wise because the QUALITY OF FRUITS of your life and ministry will be judged.

> Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work OF WHAT SORT IT IS. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
>
> 1 Corinthians 3:13-14

The judgment will also involve the quality of what you have done for the Lord. These two aspects: the quality and quantity of your fruits will be assessed at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

c. Be wise because the HIDDEN ASPECTS AND SECRETS of your life will be judged.

> Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light THE THINGS HIDDEN IN THE DARKNESS and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.
>
> 1 Corinthians 4:5 (NASB)

Apart from the fruits you have borne, there are hidden things in everyone's life. There are weaknesses and there are sins that are hidden from man's view. There are murderers who are praised by men who do not know the whole truth. There are wicked sinners who are hailed and praised by men. On the judgment day, all these secret aspects will be brought out.

d. Be wise because THE MOTIVES of your life will be judged.

> Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness AND DISCLOSE THE MOTIVES OF MEN'S HEARTS; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.
>
> 1 Corinthians 4:5 (NASB)

There are also motives and reasons for which people do good works. Many good works are done with the wrong motives. When we stand before God, our motives will be brought out. Many of our apparently good works may be declared works of no value.

CHAPTER 28

Wisdom Begins When You Fear God

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

Psalm 111:10

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. The scientists who espouse great theories and inventions but do not respect God are actually not wise. They may have some intelligence but they do not prove themselves to be wise when they do not fear God. Those who have a lot of money, a lot of education but do not honour God are also not wise people.

You begin to be wise when you begin to fear God! Your foolishness multiplies when you set God aside. Foolishness is manifested by those who do not fear God.

Why Fearing God Makes You Wise

1. **Fearing God, honouring God and respecting God are necessary because there is no theory that can explain God away:** ***Nothing can explain the wonder of the human body.***

   A theory in which blind chaos develops miraculously into human beings with perfectly working neurological systems, gastro intestinal systems, cardio vascular systems, respiratory systems, urinary systems, reproductive systems and biochemical cycles leaves me wondering.

   How billions and billions of lucky cosmic bingo atoms moving together can create such perfectly working systems with special tubes, fluids, solids and molecules and chemical reactions all working in tandem in one human being makes me wonder.

   It takes more faith to believe that the complex human body was created by the coming together of random chaos devoid of all intelligence and love. Blind confusion could not have produced what we experience today. Blind chaos could never create the wonder of the human body, as we know it today. Where did such super creative intelligence come from? Was the human body created by random movements of lucky bingo chips? What are bingo chips anyway?

2. **Fearing God, honouring God and respecting God are necessary because there is no theory that can explain God away:** ***Nothing can explain the creation of the intangible emotions and feelings of men.***

   Even if the physical things we see were created by a physical explosion, how do you explain the existence of emotions like love joy, peace, hatred and depression? A theory in which blind chaos develops miraculously into emotions like love, joy, peace, patience, hatred, depression and elation is simply untenable. How billions of cosmic bingo chips moving together can create the existence of such feelings is difficult to understand.

   It takes more faith to believe that the emotions and feelings which human beings experience,

were created by the coming together of random chaos devoid of all intelligence and love. Blind confusion could not have produced what we experience today. Where do intelligence, love, art and spirituality come from? Were they created by random movements of bingo cosmic chips?

3. Fearing God, honouring God and respecting God are necessary because there is no theory that can explain God away: ***Nothing can explain the creation of the planets and the stars.***

The theory in which the world comes together by a series of explosions which cause random, chaotically moving molecules to converge miraculously to form planets like the planet earth is simply not believable nor acceptable.

Where do our planets come from?

How come only the earth has oceans filled with fish?

How come only the earth has skies filled with birds?

How come only the earth has intelligent human beings?

Where did they all come from?

Are they all a result of accidentally moving, lucky bingo molecules?

How much deception can we take?

How come only the earth has human life?

How come life is sustained so miraculously by the conditions on the earth? All the other planets are either too hot or too cold.

How come there are no trees or rivers with fresh water on Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and all the other planets?

How come there are no animals anywhere else but on earth? Is this the product of blind chaos moving mystically together without intelligence to create an accident called Earth, with all its living creatures? What sort of accident is that?

So where do the stars come from? How come they are so far away that no human technology or ability can go there? How did they get themselves into the sky? How come stars are so big and so far? How can one star be as big as the distance between the sun and Jupiter?

4. Fearing God, honouring God and respecting God are necessary because there is no theory that can explain God away: ***Nothing can explain the creation and order of the universe.***

The universe has a beauty and an order that suggests that there is intelligence and a creator behind it all.

The existence of a Mercedes Benz in all its beautiful complexities points to the existence of a creator and an inventor. The beautiful Mercedes Benz car does not point to a gigantic nuclear explosion that happened several thousand million years ago. Such reasoning is not wisdom! Reasoning that does not include God and does not fear God is actually foolishness.

Blind chaos did not develop unintelligently into a Mercedes Benz automobile. Lucky bingo chips did not fall together to form a Mercedes Benz car with power steering, sensors and many other amazing features. The intelligent design of the universe also points to a creator and an inventor.

CHAPTER 29

Wisdom Increases by Observation

I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

THEN I SAW, AND CONSIDERED IT WELL: I LOOKED UPON IT, AND RECEIVED INSTRUCTION.

Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.

Proverbs 24:30-34

The wise man ***saw*** and ***considered*** it well! Wisdom increases as you make observations in life. Wisdom comes by deeply considering people and events in your life. Whenever you notice something unusual, God expects you to think about it deeply. As you think about what you observe, you will receive revelations and wisdom. Funerals are usually notable events that stir up your mind and your heart. Your mind and heart can be stirred up unto wisdom.

Whenever someone dies, there is an opportunity to increase in wisdom. Funerals of certain people are momentous events that God allows to increase your wisdom. Funerals will stir up wisdom in you.

The funeral of Kenneth Hagin stirred up great wisdom in me. I spent several hours watching the video of Kenneth Hagin's funeral. My wisdom increased greatly by considering his death and legacy. Listening to the testimonies of different pastors who had been affected by Kenneth Hagin's ministry gave me wisdom keys for my own ministry. All kinds of pastors from near and far gave testimonies of how, when and where they were impacted by Kenneth Hagin.

Kenneth Hagin died preaching what he had been preaching as a young man. He never changed or shifted from his calling of preaching on faith. I saw the wisdom in staying focussed on your specific calling.

I considered that I had first encountered Kenneth Hagin when he was sixty-three years old. I realised that a person can bear fruit even into his much later years. The Holy Spirit impressed upon me that if Kenneth Hagin had changed his message I would not have been touched when I encountered him in his sixties.

Today, as I look around and see how many men of God have become motivational speakers and financial preachers, shifting far from what they originally started out with, I am grateful that Kenneth Hagin did not make that mistake. I am grateful that what he preached in his forties was what he was still preaching in his sixties.

I also noticed Kenneth Hagin's funeral was attended by many pastors and ministers from all walks of life. Oral Roberts said that he did not know anyone who had made a greater impact in the world than Kenneth Hagin. Such testimonies increased my faith to minister to ministers of the

gospel rather than to have more popular programmes for the larger crowds.

The funeral of Billy Graham was another momentous event that stirred up great wisdom in me. I noticed how all the United States presidents attended his funeral. I noticed how Billy Graham was given the highest honour of lying in state in the US Capitol Rotunda. The US Capitol Rotunda has been used as a place to pay tribute to America's most distinguished citizens. Twelve American presidents had been laid in state this way. Billy Graham, a preacher of salvation, was honoured with this great honour.

I noticed that preachers of prosperity, success, motivation, happiness were not honoured as much as this man who had stuck with the unsophisticated and apparently simplistic message of salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ. I knew the wisdom God was telling me: stay with the cross! Stay with salvation! You are doing the right thing when you do that! Do not listen to those who say you are preaching basics because you do not have a revelation!

At a big funeral that was organized for someone I knew, I noticed a pattern in the way this man had died. His death was similar to some other people that I knew. The Holy Spirit whispered to my heart certain things concerning this man. The Holy Spirit whispered to me, "This type of death is caused by a certain pattern of activities."

Years later, I learnt how Moses predicted that Korah and his family would not die a natural death. They would die in a particular way that would signify something. I had already learnt this lesson at a funeral. Funerals are events where you can increase your wisdom.

> If these men die a natural death and suffer the fate of all mankind, then the LORD has not sent me.
>
> Numbers 16:29 (NIV)

My own father's funeral stirred up wisdom in me. I noticed how he lay in repose without speaking a word. My father's words and opinions had governed my life and my home for many years. I was used to his wishes being carried out. I was used to him knowing and saying what was to be done next. At his funeral, I noticed his complete silence. He never said a word and never contributed to all that was done.

We did not need his opinion and he never made any comment about the various traditional rituals that were performed at the funeral. I was stunned by his silence. I realised that when I die, I will be silent.

Everyone who dies will be completely silent. If you have any wishes or desires, you must say them now and ensure that they are done.

It is time to preach now!

It is time to teach!

Teach the word of God!

Preach all you can!

Travel all you can and give all you can!

CHAPTER 30

Wisdom Increases by Observing High Places

DOTH NOT WISDOM CRY? and understanding put forth her voice? SHE STANDETH IN THE TOP OF HIGH PLACES, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.

Proverbs 8:1-4

The high places of this earth are the great places of this earth. There are many great places and great destinations on this earth. The high places of this earth are great sources of wisdom. Going to any of these places will definitely increase your wisdom. The high places also speak of the high points of life and the high points of a career.

Great achievements are high places or high points in people's careers and lives.

Great achievements in any one must always stir up great wisdom. It should make you think great thoughts and get filled with wisdom.

The great places on this earth are great destinations that you must visit. Visiting these great destinations stirs up the wisdom of God. This is why a person who has travelled around the world seems to be more educated than someone who has never travelled anywhere, but has a degree from his community university.

I have often travelled with large groups of people in an effort to educate them with wisdom. Seeing things, and experiencing places will change your life.

One of the high places I visited was South Korea. South Korea is one of the great places on earth. I recognized how the Koreans had copied everything from outside their country. They replicated the Toyota, the Opel and the Mercedes Benz cars. There were no foreign-made cars in sight anywhere. Every car, every bus and every tractor I saw was Korean made.

I understood how great advancement could come to a nation through copying and following humbly. Copying had made them surge forward and catch up with Japan, Germany, England and America.

Today, Korean cars are used everywhere. Koreans also copied the technologies of televisions and phones. Once again, they surged forward and caught up with those who seemed to be fathers of technology, wealth and achievement.

Visiting a high place, Korea, taught me one of the greatest lessons of ministry – the art of copying and the art of following.

Another high place I visited was Yoido Gospel Church. There, I saw the greatest church in the

world. I saw and observed a huge ministry with a strong pastor. There was a lot of wisdom for me in this high place. I went home and considered for many years, the wisdom that called out to me from Yoido Full Gospel Church.

Another high place that I visited was Israel. Israel is one of the great places on the earth. I remember driving from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem at night. I thought to myself, "These people know the importance of Jerusalem and therefore have built a beautiful road to link two important cities."

I thought of many other nations that have not been able to link their two main cities with a road. I thought of many nations that are ruled by inept politicians who are simply incapable of constructing the necessary road between its two most important cities.

Another great and high place I visited was the Masai Mara in Kenya. Masai Mara is one of the famous and important wildlife conservation and wilderness areas in Africa. It is well renowned for its exceptional populations of lions, leopards, cheetahs and elephants. In other words, it is a wildlife paradise!

As I drove to this amazing high place of the earth, I was struck by the absence of a complete, good road linking Nairobi to Masai Mara. I thought to myself, "The whole world comes here to see these amazing sights and yet the nation will not pull itself together and make a safe and beautiful highway to link this place to the capital."

I realized the need to make the most of God's gift. God had given that nation an amazing gift of wildlife. I know of other countries that also have amazing wildlife reservations but have no road linking them. What amazing gift has God given you? Are you making the most of it or do you want something else?

Do you value what God has given you enough to make the necessary investment in it?

Stop looking outside for help! Stop blaming others for your poverty! Look at what God has given you and make the most of it!

Another great place I visited was the Victoria Falls. I was amazed at this natural wonder and how beautiful it was. However, that was not what struck me the first time I visited it. I was struck by the Victoria Falls steel bridge that crosses the Zambezi River. This bridge links the two countries: Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Instructions to build this bridge were given by Cecil Rhodes, Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, as part of his Cape Town to Cairo railway scheme. This bridge was pre-fabricated in England and transported through the port in Beira, Mozambique to the Victoria Falls.

Cecil Rhodes gave instructions that the bridge should be built so that when the trains passed by they would feel the spray of the waterfalls. The bridge was finally opened in 1905. It took just fourteen months to construct. The achievement of this one hundred and ninety-eight metre long steel bridge was a historic engineering landmark.

Imagine that! Pre-fabricating a bridge in England for installation in Africa in the nineteenth century!

I wondered to myself how many nations are not able to construct roads and bridges in their countries in the twenty-first century. Consider what Britain was able to do for its far away colony in 1905. Consider how they did not need a loan from China to make this bridge. Today, many

governments claim that nothing can be done except a huge loan is acquired from an international financial institution. As I considered this "high place", I realized that many leaders make empty excuses for things they could actually do. If the invading colonisers could build this great work one hundred and twenty years ago, how come the locals do not rise up and develop their own countries now that they are free and independent?

Another high place I visited was the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral. This is one of the great places on earth because it has been NASA's primary launch centre for human space flights since December 1968. The great achievement of launching the Apollo rockets and taking human beings into space were done from this location. Indeed, my visit to this place revealed how great an achievement it is to have taken human beings to the moon and brought them back safely.

Visiting and seeing the high places of the earth will always give you wisdom. What struck me at the Kennedy Space Center was the determination to overcome all obstacles in order to achieve the goal. I saw a sign that said, "*Failure is not an option*" and I saw another sign that said, "*Journey to Mars; Explorers Wanted*".

Apparently, they were planning to take human beings to Mars and seeking to solve all the problems that they would encounter. It takes a minimum of six months to fly to Mars at top speed and another six months to fly back at top super sonic speed. The flying time to Mars and back would be one continuous year at super sonic speed. The astronauts would suffer from the lack of gravity and the stress of confinement and isolation.

Once on Mars, where would the astronauts live and what would they breathe? What are they going to eat on Mars? The amount of food the astronauts would need to eat for two years would fill at least one huge sixteen-wheeler truck. How would you lift this amount of food unto a rocket? It would be impossible to lift that weight and fly it at that speed to Mars just for the meals of the astronauts.

Astronauts are trying to grow vegetables in space and scientists are figuring out how to get astronauts to convert their own faeces into something edible. Imagine that! Poopoo biscuits for lunch! All things are possible!

They are also exploring getting astronauts to recycle urine into drinkable water. Imagine that! Wee-wee water to refresh yourself!

Indeed, it is simply amazing to see some human beings overcome every obstacle in order to achieve their goals. It is time to receive the wisdom that says, "*No problem is too big to be solved. There is no mountain that cannot be climbed. There is no river that cannot be crossed*." In space there are no resources for food. Think about it! Using urine and faeces as food and drink! Such ideas only come to those who are determined to make the impossible possible. It is important to receive wisdom from every high and great place you visit.

Without a determination to overcome problems and to believe in finding solutions, many things cannot be achieved. This is the kind of wisdom that you need when you live in the poorest part of the world and are without resources.

CHAPTER 31

Wisdom Comes by Observing at the Gates

DOTH NOT WISDOM CRY? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. SHE CRIETH AT THE GATES, AT THE ENTRY OF THE CITY, AT THE COMING IN AT THE DOORS. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.

Proverbs 8:1-4

The gate of a city is the entrance of a city. Every time you arrive in a new country you are likely to receive wisdom at the very entrance. On many occasions, I have arrived at international airports and received great wisdom. Open your heart and be ready to receive wisdom from God, every time you enter a new place.

At the gates of Holland in the city of Amsterdam, I received wisdom many times. Looking out of the window of the KLM flight arriving early in the morning, I saw well-arranged farms in rectangles and squares.

I noticed that the farmlands extended right up to the perimeter of the airport. Not an inch of ground was spared or wasted. I compared this with the fields in many African countries where you just see extensive areas of bush lands and savannah.

I received wisdom! Poverty-stricken African nations waste their land and leave them uncultivated. The rich nations of the world have not wasted even one square metre of their land; even land around their high-tension electric cables was cultivated.

The neatly arranged squares and rectangles are so clearly marked out that the entire land is used up to produce something useful. *Waste not! Want not!*

It is easy to complain that you were colonised and cheated. But years and years after independence from colonizing slave traders, these patterns of waste, lack of productivity, lack of leadership, lack of ideas and the lack of frugality continue to stare at you in almost every African nation.

At the Amsterdam airport, I would walk through and find them constantly building something. I hardly went there without finding them re-building something they were already using.

I took note of how a certain kind of person is always developing, building and re-modelling existing structures to make them more relevant, more usable and always fresh.

Why are some people never building anything?

Why are some people never re-developing?

What is the problem?

Is it just the lack of resources?

Is it just the lack of money?

Certainly not! It is the lack of practical men. It is the lack of people who will roll up their sleeves and get to the job. It is the lack of people who are hands-on workers.

In 1996 I arrived at Johannesburg, the gate of South Africa, and marvelled at the similarity that existed between that airport and many other European airports. I wondered, "Is this Africa?"

I compared this airport with other African nations that I had visited. In many African countries, the airport can be compared to a three-bedroom estate house.

At the gates of these nations, you get an impression of the kinds of people that rule and lead the nation. One type of person will cause the entire nation to be poor and undeveloped. Another type will cause riches, development, beauty and modernity to prevail.

At the gates of these African nations and at the gate of Johannesburg, I learnt that it is not being *out* of Africa that makes you develop and prosper. It is not being located in a particular place that determines your future.

There is a kind of impractical leader who destroys the nation he leads by his many speeches and theoretical propositions. Such impractical leaders are unable to actually create, build and move the nation forward.

Anyone who always complains of a lack of money is impractical. There is always a shortage of money. As I write this book, I have many things that I need. Just like everybody else, I wish I had more money.

It is time to stop complaining about what you do not have and find a way of using what you do have, to create what you need.

One day, I arrived at the gate of a great nation. I understood immediately why this great nation, which should have been one of the richest nations in the world, was actually one of the poorest. It was as though there was no government, no order and no law.

This nation's border was characterized by confusion and disorder. There were several barriers at the border. A barrier consisted of two barrels linked with a stick to form a barricade. There was a man or a group of men standing by each barrel, demanding different things. Some would demand passports. Some would demand to see a drivers' licences. Some would accuse us of having foreign currency and demand that we open our wallets for inspection.

At other barrels, some would demand that we take out our luggage so that they rummage through it, at will. None of the men at this border post wore any uniform. They wore rubber slippers and shorts. Some were dressed as though they had just come out of the bathroom.

To our amazement, we spent several hours at this border post and had to pay all sorts of unauthorized monies in order to get by each barrel. Each barrel was a world on its own and each barrel seemed as determined to make as much money from us as possible before allowing us to move to the next barrel.

If the border of that nation was a reflection of the inner workings of that nation, then you could see why a nation that could have been rich was actually very poor. The absence of a good leader

leads to the absence of safety, security, order and stability. I did not need to drive any further into that country to be able to tell that this nation would be in great difficulty. There is a lot of wisdom to discover at the gates of a city.

You will receive a lot of wisdom at the gates of every nation and at the coming in at the doors. It is important to learn from these gates! God gives us these gates and entries of cities, so that He can increase our wisdom and cause us to learn from what we see and experience.

CHAPTER 32

The Mystery of Wisdom

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

1 Corinthians 2:7

God's wisdom has certain characteristics. It is these characteristics that make the wisdom of God very different from the wisdom of man. You must get used to the wisdom of God otherwise you will reject it as foolishness. You will miss the sweet revelation and wisdom that come from heaven.

I want to share with you seven characteristics of God's heavenly wisdom so that you recognize them each time they come your way.

1. The wisdom of God is hidden and mysterious.

> But we speak THE WISDOM OF GOD IN A MYSTERY, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:7

The wisdom of God is different from the wisdom of man. The wisdom of man can be explained to reasoning men. The wisdom of God is not always understood by reasoning and understanding. The wisdom of God defies logic. Many things about God's wisdom are not logical. Many things about God's wisdom do not add up. That is why people miss the wisdom of God so easily. The wisdom of God is hidden from the natural man. "The wisdom of God is full of secrets. For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but his secret is with the righteous" (Proverbs 3:32).

There are many secrets that God has kept from man. As the years go by, they are revealed. The salvation that came to us through Christ was hidden for many years and the prophets diligently sought to find out what the salvation of Christ was all about. God shows His secrets to those who fear Him.

> THE SECRET OF THE LORD IS WITH THEM THAT FEAR HIM; and he will shew them his covenant.
>
> Psalm 25:14

2. The wisdom of God is not understood by evil spirits.

> Which NONE OF THE PRINCES OF THIS WORLD KNEW: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:8

The word "Prince" is the same as "Principality". You will remember that Paul said we should not war against flesh and blood but we should war against principalities, powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world (Ephesians 6:12).

To overcome devils and to confuse them, you must operate in the wisdom of God. Devils do not know or understand the wisdom of God; that is why Jesus defeated them. The wisdom of the cross is the wisdom of God.

The princes and principalities of this world did not understand the power of sacrifice, the power of the cross, the power of losing, the power of suffering and the power of dying.

3. The wisdom of God comes through the Holy Spirit.

The wisdom of God is taught by the Holy Spirit. The more of the Holy Spirit you have, the more of God's wisdom you will enjoy. Pray for the Holy Spirit! He will impart to you the wisdom of God. It may not make sense to the human mind. But the Holy Spirit will be leading you. Unbelievers do not have the Holy Spirit. They cannot receive nor understand the wisdom of God.

> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But GOD HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US BY HIS SPIRIT: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:9-10

4. The wisdom from above is different from man's wisdom.

> Which things also we speak, NOT IN THE WORDS WHICH MAN'S WISDOM TEACHETH, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:13

The wisdom of God is not the wisdom that man teaches. Human wisdom is taught in universities. Many words are used. Bigger and bigger words are invented. Many times, man's wisdom is full of deception. A lot of the words used in the financial sector serve to draw people into arrangements, debts and confusion. Newer and newer words are invented to the point where people listening to a speech on economics cannot understand what is being said. With time, it is perceived that economists and financial people have a higher IQ and an even greater understanding than scientists.

If you remember, from your secondary school days the brightest students often did Science and many people who studied the Arts were actually unable to qualify for the Sciences.

It is amazing that medical science is even more understandable today than finance and economics. Indeed, it seems that if you do not use more and more confusing terminology, you are not seen as wise.

The wisdom of this world is often shallow, lacking depth and also deceptive. As someone said, "*It takes a colossal mind to state the obvious.*" Simple clear facts like, "Zero is greater than minus one million" are completely overlooked by these inventors of words. Listening to these many newly-invented words gives you an impression of a "word salad".

What is a "word salad"? A salad is an assorted mixture of miscellaneous leaves, fruits and vegetables. A word salad is a collection of words, some more difficult to pronounce, some short words, some long ones, some easy to understand words and some confusing words.

Financial people seem to enjoy speaking word salads. They have amazing words like, profit participative bonds, hybrid instruments, private placements, mergers and acquisitions, money

markets, brokerage, debt ratios, acid test, premium, futures, amortization, securitizations, stocks, mortgages, re-financing and leverages.

Most people do not understand what these things are and what they mean. Is there a reason why people invent all these words? Why give a speech which very few people understand? This is man's wisdom and it is different from God's wisdom.

5. The wisdom of God has been ordained by God to make us glorious.

> But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even THE HIDDEN WISDOM, which God ordained before the world UNTO OUR GLORY:
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:7

The wisdom of God is ordained for your glory. If you follow the wisdom of God, you will become glorious and your life will be beautiful. The wisdom of God is ordained to change your life and your ministry.

Many people who are in the ministry do not follow the wisdom of God. They believe in the secular methods of doing things.

They believe in advertising, they believe in the media, they believe in psychology, they believe in connections, they believe in the power of finances, they believe in loans, they believe in mortgages, they believe in doing business, they believe in earthly acclaim and they believe in the honour of men.

That is not the wisdom of God. The wisdom of God has to do with prayer, fasting, the word of God, the blood of Jesus, the anointing, humility, the Spirit of God, the grace of God, the love of God, the help of God and the holiness of Almighty God.

You must choose to believe in the wisdom of God because it is ordained for your glory. It is following the cross and the sacrifice it demands that will make you glorious. People who do not follow the cross of Jesus Christ do not have the glory of God in their lives.

If you lose your life, you will find it! It is the wisdom of God!

These are not words that can be explained in the book of logic.

These are mysterious words of God's wisdom.

The glory I see in my life and ministry did not come from following logic. Common sense and logic are not what we are following after. We are seeking the word of God and the wisdom of God and it will lead us to glory, beauty and joy.

6. A natural man cannot receive the wisdom from above. It is always foolishness to a natural man so do not try to impress the world.

> But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:14

The natural man does not receive the wisdom of God. As long as you remain in your natural state, you will not be able to receive God's wisdom. Sometimes you must assess people's spirituality before you speak to them. The natural man simply cannot receive the wisdom of God.

The wisdom of God teaches about things like tithing, giving, sacrificing, the blood of Jesus and the cross of Jesus Christ.

The wisdom of God teaches you not to borrow but rather to follow the Holy Spirit and be led by the voice of God.

The wisdom of God speaks the Ten Commandments.

There is nothing greater than the wisdom in the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments encapsulate all the things that human beings should live by.

Today, some pastors have stopped preaching about heaven and hell. We do not want to frighten our congregation, they say. There are others who do not mention the devil because they do not want the church to focus on the spirit world. Others leave out the amazing teaching on how the world was created.

The wisdom of God tells us how the world was created. Worldly wisdom tells us that the world was created out of chaos when billions of cosmic bingo chips came together to form this amazing universe. What are cosmic bingo chips? Indeed, it takes faith to believe in such nonsense.

Keep preaching the wisdom of God, the call of God, the timings of God, the birth of Christ, the Virgin Mary, Jonah and the whale, the death of Jesus Christ and the resurrection from the dead. These things are the wisdom of God. It is time to proclaim and publish God's will and God's ways in His dealings with men. God is kind! God is merciful! God is patient! However, He is a God of severe judgment.

7. You must determine to be a minister of God's wisdom rather than a minister of man's wisdom.

> And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. FOR I DETERMINED NOT to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.
>
> 1 Corinthians 2:1-2

A motivational speaker may be acclaimed by the world. A man who speaks with word salads may be considered a very wise man. Do not worry about being acclaimed by the world.

Be like Apostle Paul who determined to know and speak about Jesus Christ and Him crucified. When you determine to know only Jesus Christ and Him crucified, it does not mean that you do not know any other thing. It means that you have decided to stick with the wisdom of God.

I used to hear Reinhard Bonnke say, "I preach the A-B-C of the gospel." Sometimes he would add, "I know the X-Y-Z as well but I am an evangelist and my message is the A-B-C of the gospel." Apostle Paul also said that he was determined to stick with Jesus Christ and the message of the cross. Nothing would make him veer off into vain jangling!

It is sad to say that many famous preachers have veered off into vain jangling. It is no wonder that the church is as weak as it is today. If you were forced to eat only sweets, lollipops, ice cream from morning to evening, and from Monday to Friday, you would certainly not be healthy.

You must determine to teach only the wisdom of God. Determine to stay in the glorious

wisdom of God and reject earthly ideas.

CHAPTER 33

Wisdom Increases As You Meditate

My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

Psalm 49:3

Seven Powerful Effects of Meditation

1. **Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING.**

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.

Psalm 119:99

The Psalmist has more wisdom and understanding because he meditates on the word of God. Meditation is the art of thinking deeply, contemplating, reflecting and going over the same thing several times! Most people do not think deeply about anything. It is important to think deeply about events that happen all around you. It is also important to think deeply about what you read in the Bible.

It is important to think deeply about the word of God. As you reflect on what you hear or read, you receive a deeper understanding.

Meditation greatly helps you to remember the things you are reading. People who do not meditate are shallow. Wisdom increases through active meditation.

2. **Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO GOOD SUCCESS.**

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Joshua 1:8

Joshua was instructed to meditate on the word of God. His meditation was the master key to his successful career in the military. The key to your successful career in the ministry is meditation. I have encountered several ministers of the gospel who asked me questions about the ministry. When I pointed them to my books, they would say, “I have read it but I did not see that.” They were amazed when I showed them things in the book. They were simply people who never engaged in thinking deeply, contemplating, reflecting and going over the same thing several times!

Truly, without going over the same thing several times, you will not get the revelation, the wisdom and the guidance that you need.

3. **Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO SUCCESS IN MINISTRY.**

Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of

the hands of the presbytery. MEDITATE UPON THESE THINGS; GIVE THYSELF WHOLLY TO THEM; that thy profiting may appear to all.

1 Timothy 4:14-15

Success in ministry depends on you focussing on the gift God has given you. To be successful in ministry, you need to think deeply, contemplate and reflect on the gifts God has given to you. If you do not think about the gift of God, how can you give yourself wholly to it? How would you know how to use the gift properly if you did not meditate on the gift?

4. Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO A GREAT CHANGE.

He went to work for someone who lived in that country, who sent him to the fields to feed the pigs The son wanted to fill his stomach with the food the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything. "THEN HE BEGAN TO THINK CLEARLY AGAIN. HE SAID, 'HOW MANY OF MY FATHER'S HIRED WORKERS HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH FOOD! BUT HERE I AM DYING FROM HUNGER! I will get up and go back to my father. I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven. And I have sinned against you.

Luke 15:15-18 (NIRV)

The prodigal son experienced a great change when he thought deeply about his condition. It was only when he thought deeply about how bad his condition was that the change began. Because he did not think deeply about how terrible his state was, he continued living like a pig. When he thought deeply and reflected on the reality that he had become a pig or a piglet, he began the journey towards the great change.

Many of the things in our world are deceptive in nature. People are portrayed as rich when in actual fact they are deep in debt. Owing millions is presented as being successful. People who do not need to borrow money are forced to borrow money so that they can say they have a good credit rating. Absurdity is glorified and emptiness, shallowness and hollowness are honoured.

It is only when you think deeply about these things that you realise how fake they actually are. Change comes when you reflect on realities! Major changes are going to take place in your life as you become someone who sits quietly to meditate!

5. Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO RECEIVING INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR LIFE.

I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;

And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

Then I SAW, AND CONSIDERED IT WELL: I looked upon it, and RECEIVED INSTRUCTION.

Proverbs 24:30-32

Instructions coming from a trusted source are some of the best gifts you can ever have. What shall I do next? Where shall I go? What should I become?

The wise man in Proverbs saw the field, saw the thorns, saw the broken down wall and began

thinking. As his mind went over and over the issues, he received instruction.

He knew what God was telling him to do. He knew what God was warning him about. He knew what he had to avoid. There were other passersby who did not think deeply about the broken walls and the neglected fields.

Because they did not think deeply about it, they never received instructions. From today you will begin to receive instructions for your life!

6. Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO LOVING GOD.

O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.

Psalm 119:97-98

You fall in love with what you think about. O how you will love the law that you meditate on! You will fall in love with books if you meditate on them. Meditating on a book is to go over the book several times.

Reading a book is to go through it once. Meditating on a book is to go over the same book several times. It is only when you go over the book several times that you will receive the wisdom and instructions therein.

If you think about somebody all day long, you are probably in love with the person. You fall in love with God as you think about His word all day long.

The book you have in your hand has much more in it for you.

Without reading it over and over again, you will never glean the wisdom that is contained in it.

7. Meditation, contemplation, reflection, deep thinking and going over the same thing several times are KEYS TO COMMUNICATION WITH GOD.

Give ear to my words, O LORD, CONSIDER MY MEDITATION.

Psalm 5:1

Meditation is a type of prayer! God listens to your meditations!

God considers the things you meditate about.

Meditation occurs when you think deeply.

God listens to the thoughts of your heart as well as the words of your mouth.

That is why the words of your mouth *and* the meditation of your heart must be acceptable to God.

There is a realm of meditation which becomes prayer.

Your deep thoughts, your deep contemplation, your deep reflection and your deep thinking become prayers to God.

It is not only the words of your mouth that God listens to. God also listens to the meditation of your heart.

> Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.
>
> Psalm 19:14

CHAPTER 34

Manifestations of Wisdom: Soul Winning

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and HE THAT WINNETH SOULS IS WISE.

Proverbs 11:30

1. He that wins souls and builds churches has a great wisdom about him.

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and HE THAT WINNETH SOULS IS WISE.

Proverbs 11:30

The world will not consider a soul winner as a wise man!

Billy Graham or Reinhard Bonnke would not be considered as wise men by world.

I think the world would rather consider people like Einstein, Socrates and other famous scientists as wise men.

However, God's word says that soul winning is one of the greatest manifestations of wisdom. Become a wise man by becoming a soul winner!

2. It is wise to win souls because winning souls and building churches makes your life glorious. Wise people shall inherit the glory.

THE WISE SHALL INHERIT GLORY: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

Proverbs 3:35

The glory of God will be given to those who win souls. Winning souls is the practice of wisdom. There comes a time we must set aside all reason and believe the word of God.

He that winneth souls is wise! Win souls! You will inherit the glory of God. Be a soul winner! You will be covered with such glory for winning souls.

In eternity, you will be surprised that winning souls will be declared the wisest thing you ever did.

3. It is wise to win souls because winning souls, turning many to righteousness, and building churches will make you into a star.

AND THEY THAT BE WISE SHALL SHINE as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Daniel 12:3

Apart from inheriting glory, you will become a star shining forever. Stars have been in existence for billions of years. They have been shining in the distance for billions of years. God has promised that you will also shine like a star. This great promise is for soul winners.

4. It is wise to win souls because winning souls gives you special wages. As a soul winner,

expect a stable income.

> Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. AND HE THAT REAPETH RECEIVETH WAGES, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.
>
> John 4:35-36

As a soul winner, expect a wise and stable job. Soul winners are blessed with financial increase as well. He that reapeth the harvest will receive wages from above.

5. It is wise to win souls because soul winning causes you to reap a harvest of joy.

> I say unto you, that likewise JOY SHALL BE IN HEAVEN over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.
>
> Luke 15:7

Whenever you win souls you reap a harvest of joy. Every time you win a soul, you cause so much joy in heaven. You are destined to reap joy on earth. If you bring joy to people, you can expect to reap joy in your own life. If you bring sorrow and anguish to someone, you can expect to reap sorrow, anguish, depression, disappointment and disillusionment.

Whatever a man sows, he shall reap. Every time you bring joy to heaven, God will multiply joy back to you. Decide to bring a lot of joy to God in heaven by being a soul winner. God will ensure that you have a hundredfold return of joy in your own life.

6. It is wise to win souls because soul winning is not in vain.

> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch AS YE KNOW THAT YOUR LABOUR IS NOT IN VAIN IN THE LORD.
>
> 1 Corinthians 15:58

Almost every earthly venture is an activity in vain. Soul winning is the Lord's work. It is not in vain! Winning souls is the wisest thing you can ever do with your life. When you win souls, you will be doing something with a lasting and permanent result.

7. It is wise to win souls because soul winning allows the power of God to work freely in your life.

> FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST: FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
>
> Romans 1:16

The gospel of Jesus Chris is the power of God onto salvation. Everybody who preaches the gospel dabbles with the power of God. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a simple message. It is a humble message.

It is a message that the so-called wise in this world are unable to fathom. Many churches have replaced this famous message with motivational speeches and with excuses for not mentioning heaven or hell any more.

The death of Billy Graham and the acclaim he received for his simple gospel message through the years, rebuked the modern church for drifting away from the simple truth of the gospel.

Because the church has left the gospel of Jesus behind, it has inadvertently left the power of God behind. The powerless church is now begging for money every day.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God.

If you preach the gospel, you will see the power of God in every area of your life. It is wise to preach the gospel and win souls because it releases the power of God into your life.

CHAPTER 35

Manifestations of Wisdom: Humility

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.

James 3:13 (NIV)

Humility comes from wisdom. This is one of the lesser-known facts of life. It is wise to be humble! A wise person is humble!

It is a very wise decision to be humble, meek and lowly.

Few people would propose that a humble attitude is a wise attitude.

It has been more than two thousand years since the famous philosopher, Socrates, argued that humility is the greatest of all virtues. Socrates made a timeless observation that *the wisest people are the first to admit how little they really know.*

Wisdom of Mary: Humility

Few people know why God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus. What did she know? What did she have? What qualifications or what education did she possess that impressed God to choose her as the mother of our Lord? We have only one window into the life of Mary. This window reveals Mary's wisdom of humility. Listen to her words:

> And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,
>
> And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.
>
> For he hath regarded THE LOW ESTATE OF HIS HANDMAIDEN: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
>
> For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.
>
> And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.
>
> He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath SCATTERED THE PROUD in the imagination of their hearts.
>
> He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and EXALTED THEM OF LOW DEGREE.
>
> He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.
>
> He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;
>
> As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

Luke 1:46-55

Mary was a woman of humility. She described the *low estate* of His handmaiden. It is this low estate that attracted Almighty God to her. She spoke of herself as a woman of low degree. Both of these descriptions, a low estate and a low degree, speak of intense humility. Mary also said that God had scattered the proud.

Humility is a mysterious secret of wisdom. It is the wisdom that allowed Mary to be chosen and favoured above all other women in the world. Think of all the strivings that we engage in, in order to get ourselves promoted, exalted and advanced in this life. Mary used the key of humility and got herself selected for an unequalled blessing.

Humility is Wisdom! Wisdom is Humility!

Some recent secular studies have shown that humility is indeed a sign of wisdom.

In one study, students rated the humblest achieved better grades than those who were considered to have a more inflated opinion of themselves.

In another study, the humility of a student has proven to be a better predictor of performance than measures of actual intelligence.

In yet another study, humility was particularly important in compensating for people with lower IQs. Indeed, students with lower IQs but more humility, performed as well as people with much higher IQs.

The latest research suggests that humility is especially important for leaders. Displays of humility in a leader have been shown to improve strategic thinking and boost his performance in the organisation.

Certain world leaders are noted for their intellectual humility. Abraham Lincoln was famous for his humble attitude and his capacity to acknowledge his own flaws and errors. This attitude was thought to have improved his tactical decision-making.

Angela Merkel's background in science is credited with giving her a greater intellectual humility. This intellectual humility helped her to check her assumptions and to listen to other people's opinion before forming her own. It is this humble attitude that is thought to have helped her navigate Germany through a series of crises during her years as Germany's chancellor.

The Wisest is the Most Humble

Life is a long lesson in humility. Ministry is a very long lesson in humility. The pain you will suffer in ministry is supposed to lead you to humility. Remember that humility makes you real and pride makes you unreal and over-confident.

Jesus said the greatest person was the one who was as humble as a child. In other words, *the wisest person is the most humble person!*

CHAPTER 36

Dark Sayings of Wisdom

To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

Proverbs 1:6

1. Always learn something new.

A WISE MAN WILL HEAR, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

Proverbs 1:5

Humility is the greatest of all virtues. The wisest people are the first to admit how little they really know - Socrates

Humility is really important because it keeps you fresh and new – Stephen Tyler

Humility is the beginning of true intelligence – John Calvin

2. Always say to yourself, "I know nothing."

And IF ANY MAN THINK THAT HE KNOWETH ANY THING, HE KNOWETH NOTHING yet as he ought to know.

1 Corinthians 8:2

A true genius admits that he knows nothing – Albert Einstein

Humility, gentleness and helpfulness go so much further and open doors you cannot imagine – Ann Tran

3. Always say to yourself, "I can increase my wisdom."

And JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Luke 2:52

In the course of my life, I have often had to eat my words, and I must confess that I have always found it a wholesome diet. The great lesson in life is to know that even fools are right sometimes – Winston Churchill

4. Always remain a child. Children are always learning and increasing in knowledge.

Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

Ecclesiastes 4:13

I believe the first test of a truly great man is his humility – John Ruskin

The soul is healed by being with children – Fyodor Dostoevsky

5. Always learn from nature.

GO TO THE ANT, THOU SLUGGARD; CONSIDER HER WAYS, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

Proverbs 6:6-11

A great man is always willing to be little – Ralph Emerson

6. Always learn from fathers.

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 2:1-2

Stay hungry, stay young, stay foolish, stay curious and above all, stay humble because just when you think you got all the answers is the moment when some bitter twist of fate in the universe will remind you that you very much don't – Tom Hiddleston

7. Always learn from books.

The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee , and the books, but especially the parchments.

2 Timothy 4:13

In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:2

CHAPTER 37

Wisdom Minus the Fear of God

I WISDOM dwell with prudence, and FIND OUT KNOWLEDGE OF WITTY INVENTIONS.

Proverbs 8:12

Does God give wisdom and revelation only to Christians? Certainly not! Many of the outstanding discoveries of this world were made by unbelievers who did not know God. God makes both Christians and non-Christians to receive his blessings of wisdom.

> **…He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**
>
> **Matthew 5:45**

Unfortunately, these non-believers have not given glory to God for the gift and knowledge that they were given. They did not want to retain God in their thinking. The more human beings reject the presence of God, the more they are given over to depravity. They became depraved scientists and depraved thinkers!

> And even AS THEY DID NOT LIKE TO RETAIN GOD IN THEIR KNOWLEDGE, GOD GAVE THEM OVER TO A REPROBATE MIND, to do those things which are not convenient;
>
> Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
>
> backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
>
> Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:
>
> Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.
>
> Romans 1:28-32

They received scientific knowledge and revelation but did not glorify God for it. Because they did not choose to honour God, these so called intelligent people became fools. The beginning of wisdom is to fear God.

> THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.
>
> Psalm 111:10

The bible confirms many examples of God giving great wisdom to people who did not know him. They should have given the glory to God after receiving the gift of wisdom from above.

1. God gave wisdom to the butler in Egypt.

And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.

And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? And they said unto him, we have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you.

And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, IN MY DREAM, BEHOLD, A VINE WAS BEFORE ME; AND IN THE VINE WERE THREE BRANCHES: AND IT WAS AS THOUGH IT BUDDED, AND HER BLOSSOMS SHOT FORTH; AND THE CLUSTERS THEREOF BROUGHT FORTH RIPE GRAPES: AND PHARAOH'S CUP WAS IN MY HAND: AND I TOOK THE GRAPES, AND PRESSED THEM INTO PHARAOH'S CUP, AND I GAVE THE CUP INTO PHARAOH'S HAND.

Genesis 40:5-11

2. God gave wisdom to the baker in Egypt.

And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? And they said unto him, we have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you...

When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I ALSO WAS IN MY DREAM, AND, BEHOLD, I HAD THREE WHITE BASKETS ON MY HEAD: AND IN THE UPPERMOST BASKET THERE WAS OF ALL MANNER OF BAKEMEATS FOR PHARAOH; AND THE BIRDS DID EAT THEM OUT OF THE BASKET UPON MY HEAD.

Genesis 40:5-8, 16-17

3. God gave wisdom to Pharaoh.

And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, THERE CAME UP OUT OF THE RIVER SEVEN WELL FAVOURED KINE AND FATFLESHED; AND THEY FED IN A MEADOW. AND, BEHOLD, SEVEN OTHER KINE CAME UP AFTER THEM OUT OF THE RIVER, ILL FAVOURED AND LEANFLESHED; AND STOOD BY THE OTHER KINE UPON THE BRINK OF THE RIVER. AND THE ILL FAVOURED AND LEANFLESHED KINE DID EAT UP THE SEVEN WELL FAVOURED AND FAT KINE. So Pharaoh awoke.

And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, SEVEN EARS OF CORN CAME UP UPON ONE STALK, RANK AND GOOD.

AND, BEHOLD, SEVEN THIN EARS AND BLASTED WITH THE EAST WIND

SPRUNG UP AFTER THEM. AND THE SEVEN THIN EARS DEVOURED THE SEVEN RANK AND FULL EARS. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

Genesis 41:1-8

4. God gave wisdom to Abimelech.

But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, BEHOLD, THOU ART BUT A DEAD MAN, FOR THE WOMAN WHICH THOU HAST TAKEN; FOR SHE IS A MAN'S WIFE.

Genesis 20:3

5. God wisdom to Nebuchadnezzar.

But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass.

But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

THOU, O KING, SAWEST, AND BEHOLD A GREAT IMAGE. THIS GREAT IMAGE, WHOSE BRIGHTNESS WAS EXCELLENT, STOOD BEFORE THEE; AND THE FORM THEREOF WAS TERRIBLE. THIS IMAGE'S HEAD WAS OF FINE GOLD, HIS BREAST AND HIS ARMS OF SILVER, HIS BELLY AND HIS THIGHS OF BRASS, HIS LEGS OF IRON, HIS FEET PART OF IRON AND PART OF CLAY. THOU SAWEST TILL THAT A STONE WAS CUT OUT WITHOUT HANDS, WHICH SMOTE THE IMAGE UPON HIS FEET THAT WERE OF IRON AND CLAY, AND BRAKE THEM TO PIECES. THEN WAS THE IRON, THE CLAY, THE BRASS, THE SILVER, AND THE GOLD, BROKEN TO PIECES TOGETHER, AND BECAME LIKE THE CHAFF OF THE SUMMER THRESHINGFLOORS; AND THE WIND CARRIED THEM AWAY, THAT NO PLACE WAS FOUND FOR THEM: AND THE STONE THAT SMOTE THE IMAGE BECAME A GREAT MOUNTAIN, AND FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH.

Daniel 2:28-35

6. God gave information and wisdom to Belshazzar.

Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein. Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and

of stone.

IN THE SAME HOUR CAME FORTH FINGERS OF A MAN'S HAND, AND WROTE OVER AGAINST THE CANDLESTICK UPON THE PLAISTER OF THE WALL OF THE KING'S PALACE: AND THE KING SAW THE PART OF THE HAND THAT WROTE. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.

Then came in all the king's wise men: but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonied.

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

Daniel 5:1-13

7. God gave wisdom to Pilate's wife. Pontius Pilate's wife knew that Jesus was not an ordinary person.

When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, HAVE THOU NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT JUST MAN: FOR I HAVE SUFFERED MANY THINGS THIS DAY IN A DREAM BECAUSE OF HIM.

Matthew 27:19

CHAPTER 38
The Wisdom from Above

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

The wisdom from above has several pillars. These pillars are well-defined and described by the apostle James. This famous scripture above can be considered as a map of wisdom for your life. If you remember this scripture, you will be remembering what it means to be wise at every point of your life. Any time you are faced with a decision, just quote to yourself all the eight pillars of James 3:17. Say to yourself: it is wise to be pure; it is wise to be peaceable; it is wise to be gentle; it is wise to be easily entreated; it is wise to be full of mercy; it is wise to bear good fruits; it is wise to be impartial and it is wise to be without hypocrisy. These points will act as a map of wisdom to you!

1. It is wise to be pure.

It is wise to be pure. Purity speaks of continuity. Purity speaks of the absence of evil. The presence of a foreign body contaminates and changes everything. Even a foreign voice contaminates and defiles a person. It is wise to have within what you advertise on the outside.

When you are not pure, there is something wrong with you. When the impurity eventually comes out, everything about you will be set aside, cancelled and over-ridden. You will not be able to function anymore because your impurities have been discovered. Impurities are often small things but they are game changers.

If you add just two drops of ink to a glass of water, the water becomes undrinkable. It is true that the ink is very small but it still makes the water undrinkable.

What small things are there in your life that completely change who you are? They may be little things but they change everything. What is unholy in your life? What is wicked in your life? Get rid of the impurities before they kill you.

2. It is wise to be peaceful.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:18

Peace is an important pillar of wisdom. Without peace, you cannot develop. He who seeks for revenge must build two graves![1] Those who cannot live at peace must prepare for devastation on both sides. There is always a reason to have conflict. God's wisdom will lead you to walk in the path of peace. The scripture says, the fruit of righteousness is borne in peace by those who love peace.

It is wise to be peaceable. You must determine to have peace in your life. You must seek peace

with all men.

3. It is wise to be gentle.

By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.

Exodus 23:30

It is wise to be gentle. Instead of being jumpy, rash, erratic or pushy, receive the wisdom to be gentle and gradual in your approach. Many problems cannot be solved.

Even more importantly, many problems cannot be solved with one strong push or one big bang.

Little by little, you will overcome many huge problems.

Do not push too hard! It is wise to be gentle!

What mountain is there that you are trying to move? The Lord promised to clear your greatest mountains and your greatest troubles gradually.

4. It is wise to be easily entreated.

It is wise to be easily entreated! What is the use of your mind if it cannot change?

Those who are resistant to change are not wise. They are stubborn!

Stubbornness is connected to demon activity because stubbornness is as iniquity.

Iniquity is the crookedness and the perversity that is found as a result of sin and demonic activity.

Decide to have the wisdom of being easily entreated, easily advised or easily counselled.

5. It is wise to be full of mercy.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

Proverbs 3:3

It is wise to be full of mercy. Being forgiving is the same as being wise. Unforgiveness is the only sin that God will not forgive you for. It is not wise to hold onto unforgiveness! Most of the time you are guilty of the very things that you accuse others of.

Scripture teaches that it is wise to bind mercy and truth around your neck. One day you will be glad that you were merciful.

Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy!

6. It is wise to be of good fruits.

It is wise to be full of good fruits. If you have only one fruit, it is likely to be taken away from you. The more fruits you bear, the more stable you are. Many people are satisfied with the little they have produced. It is a great thing that I have trained a lot of pastors. It is indeed a wise

move to train two hundred pastors.

It is a great thing to have raised up a singer. It is wise to have even more singers to perform. More fruit is always a sign of wisdom. The Bible says, children are like arrows in the quiver. The more arrows you have, the more options, the more opportunities and the more reason s you have to be successful.

It is wise to be fruitful because Jesus told us clearly that the Father is glorified when we bear much fruit. It is wise to follow Jesus. It is wise to obey the Lord.

7. It is wise to be without partiality.

It is wise to be impartial. Some people are openly partial. Being partial is to lay a foundation for disloyalty. People are very concerned about fair treatment. One day I invited a brother to be in full time ministry. He said to me, "I would be interested in working full time if I will be treated fairly."

Human beings are often full of partiality, favouritism and nepotism. Where there is partiality, you do not advance or improve based on merit.

You are neglected because you do not fall into the right group.

This is very offensive to those who fall into the wrong group.

A lot of disloyal reactions are based on partiality.

A good leader must be the master of playing a fair game. It is wise to be impartial. It is wise to demonstrate to people that you are indeed treating everybody fairly.

My mother went to great lengths to demonstrate to me that she had treated all her children fairly. She kept a record of everything that she did for us and showed it to all of us.

She wanted everyone to see that no one had been treated better than the other.

Although I found it unnecessary, I realised later that experience was making her show us all that we had all been treated the same.

It is wise to be without partiality.

8. It is wise to be without hypocrisy

BUT WOE UNTO YOU, SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, HYPOCRITES! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Matthew 23:13

It is wise to be without hypocrisy. Hypocrisy is when you act the part that you are really not. It is very difficult to keep a secret forever. Jesus said everything that is hidden will be spoken on the rooftops. It is therefore wise to live as far from hypocrisy, pretence, duplicity and duality as possible.

I have found that those who put their trust in a life of hypocrisy are eventually totally devastated when the truth about their lives is exposed.

Indeed, Christians have been known to go for years, living shockingly dual lives. These people have their trust in something that will not survive the test of time. It is not a wise thing to be a hypocrite, a pretender or an actor.

Acting is hard work. That is why actors are paid so much.

Christian hypocrites have to pretend all through their lives. Christian hypocrites have to lead everyone to think that they are something that they are not. How difficult and laborious it is to live two lives!

CHAPTER 39

A Wise Man is a Man of Works

WHO IS A WISE MAN and endued with knowledge among you? LET HIM SHEW OUT OF A GOOD CONVERSATION HIS WORKS with meekness of wisdom.

James 3:13

Who is a wise man? Do you know any wise man? Do you know anyone who is actually wise in God's sight? It is important to recognize wisdom when you see it. Wisdom is recognized by its works. The scripture above asks the question, "Who is a wise man?" it answers the question immediately and says a wise man should prove that he is a wise man, *by his good works.*

"If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honourable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom" (James 3:13 NLT).

Do you know how to identify a wise man? When Jesus was on the earth, He was marked out by His works. His works revealed that He was a wise man.

"And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and WHAT WISDOM is this which is given unto him, that even such MIGHTY WORKS are wrought by his hands?" (Mark 6:2)

If you study the outcome of many elections, you will realise that people do not necessarily choose wise men to rule a nation.

People often choose handsome men, tribesmen, friendly men, sociable men, affable men, approachable men, pleasant men, outgoing men, rich men, welcoming men, hospitable men, generous men instead of choosing a wise man. Often, a man of great works is not a man of many words.

A wise man must be identified by his works. What have you built? What have you achieved? What have you accomplished? Show us the practical works you have done and we will choose you!

I once saw a man teaching wisdom, success and prosperity on a television. He had many followers and admirers. Many were impressed with his choice of English words and his quotations from *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Many followed him to learn the wisdom for this life.

However, in real life, this man was a failure in business. His failed businesses were up for sale and he was unable to fulfil his obligations. I wondered how someone who could not run a business could teach life's skills and share success keys.

Yet, the world is filled with many such people: people who have words without works. Our world is filled with people who have "word salads" to offer but nothing substantial to show as fruits of their wisdom. A man of wisdom is a man of works!

1. SOLOMON: A WISE MAN OF WORKS:

> Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.
>
> 1 Kings 3:12

The wisdom of Solomon made him the richest man in the world.

The wisdom of Solomon made him expand the kingdom of Israel in great stability and wealth.

The wisdom of God caused Solomon to write three of the books of the Old Testament: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Songs of Solomon.

The wisdom of God caused Solomon to build the temple, build his house and build the kingdom of Israel. Through the wisdom of God, he reigned extensively in stability and prosperity. Solomon did not reign so extensively because he was tall and handsome. Certainly not! Solomon was not a successful ruler because he was from a particular tribe. Solomon was successful because of the wisdom God gave him.

Solomon did not stand for elections. He did not need to be popular to rule Israel. He was a wise man and his wisdom created wealth and riches. It was the wisdom of Solomon that created Solomon's temple. It was not Solomon's friendliness that enabled him to build the temple of God. It was not the fact that Solomon was open, approachable or handsome that enabled him to do his great works.

2. DAVID: A WISE MAN OF WORKS:

> To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and MY LORD IS WISE, ACCORDING TO THE WISDOM OF AN ANGEL OF GOD, to know all things that are in the earth.
>
> 2 Samuel 14:20

The wisdom of David made him the greatest king of Israel. David died full of age, riches and honour. Today, the star of David is displayed in the Israeli flag.

David's achievements as a king who conquered vast regions for Israel is well known.

Do you think that David conquered vast territories because he was handsome or approachable? Do you think David was the most successful king of Israel because he was friendly and polite?

Do you think David was so successful because he was a good orator? Certainly not!

3. JOSEPH: A WISE MAN OF WORKS:

> NOW THEREFORE LET PHARAOH LOOK OUT A MAN DISCREET AND WISE, AND SET HIM OVER THE LAND OF EGYPT.
>
> Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.
>
> And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, THERE IS NONE SO DISCREET AND WISE AS THOU ART:

Genesis 41:33-39

The wisdom of Joseph made him the Prime Minister of the greatest nation of his world.

Joseph bought the whole land of Egypt for Pharaoh and made every citizen of the country pay taxes to the king.

Joseph rescued the nation of Egypt from famine and from an economic holocaust.

Joseph fed the nations all around and supplied all the needs of his hungry population. Joseph did not feed the nations because he was handsome, friendly, sociable, affable, approachable, pleasant, outgoing, rich, welcoming, hospitable and generous.

Joseph was a wise man. He was a really wise man and his works proved it. The biblical way to identify a wise man is by his works!

4. DANIEL: A WISE MAN OF WORKS:

THERE IS A MAN IN THY KINGDOM, IN WHOM IS THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLY GODS; AND IN THE DAYS OF THY FATHER LIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM, LIKE THE WISDOM OF THE GODS, WAS FOUND IN HIM; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

Then was Daniel brought in before the king. And the king spake and said unto Daniel, Art thou that Daniel, which art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Jewry?

I HAVE EVEN HEARD OF THEE, THAT THE SPIRIT OF THE GODS IS IN THEE, AND THAT LIGHT AND UNDERSTANDING AND EXCELLENT WISDOM IS FOUND IN THEE.

And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known unto me the interpretation thereof: but they could not shew the interpretation of the thing:

Daniel 5:11-15

The wisdom of Daniel made him a national hero. Daniel was filled with excellent wisdom, understanding and counsel. Daniel was promoted and served as Prime Minister in three different regimes. He served under Nebuchadnezzar. He served under Belshazzar. And he served under Darius!

The book of Daniel, testifies of the great works which Daniel accomplished. From the account in the book of Daniel, we see the work of Daniel and the great things he accomplished. This qualifies him to join the list of wise men.

Daniel was not just handsome, friendly, sociable, affable, approachable, pleasant, outgoing, rich, welcoming, hospitable and generous. Daniel was a wise man. He was a really wise man and his works prove it.

Stop choosing people because they are friendly, tall or short. Choose them because they are wise men who have proved their wisdom with their works.

Conclusion

To the making of many books there is no end. It is my prayer that the wisdom of God about which I have written in these few pages will be a blessing to you, your family and your ministry!

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